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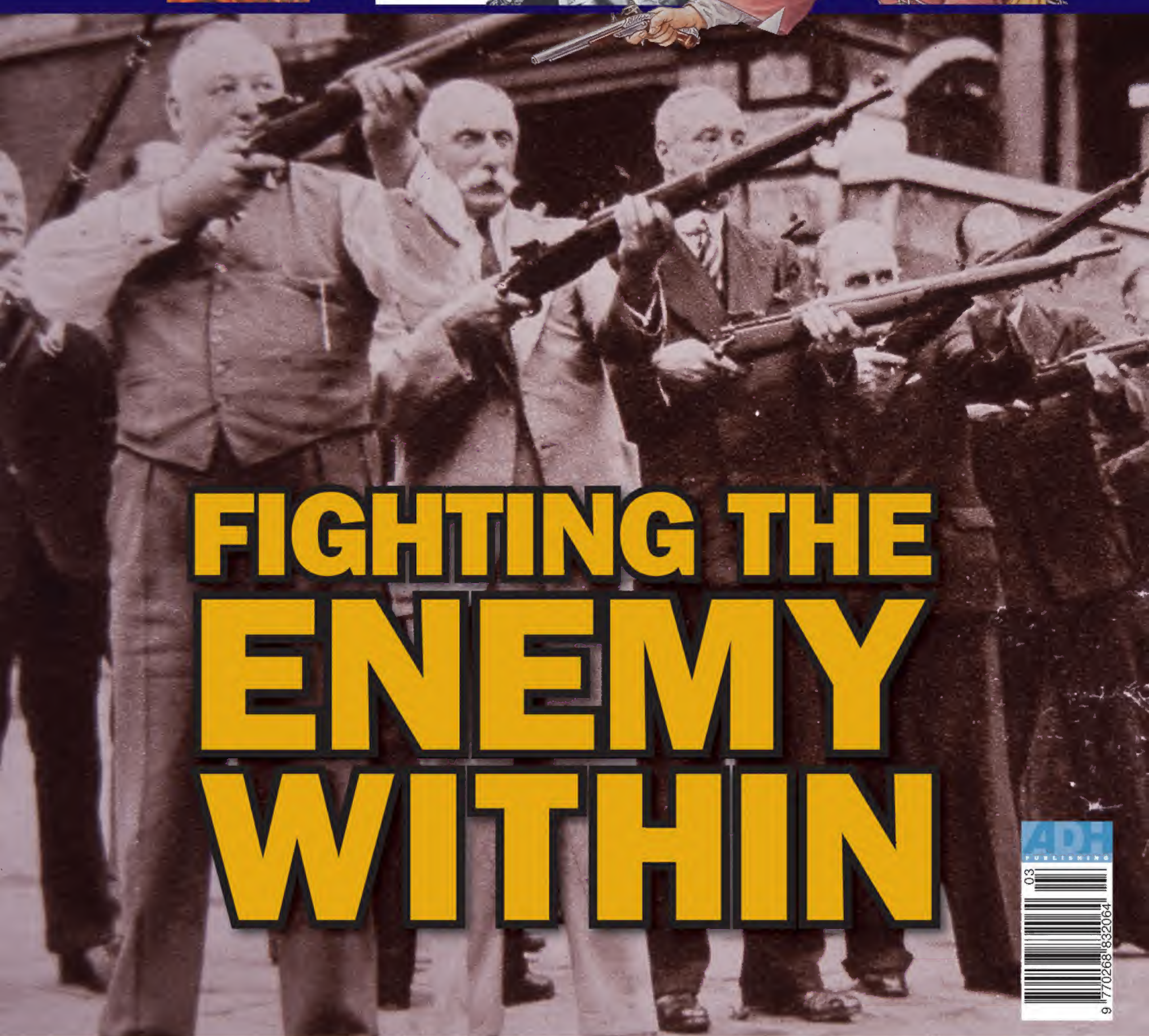
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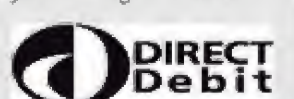
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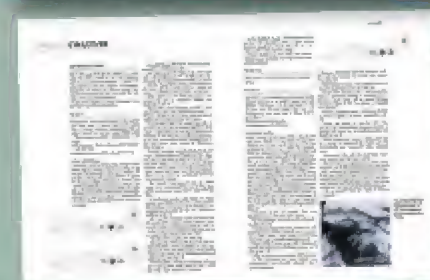


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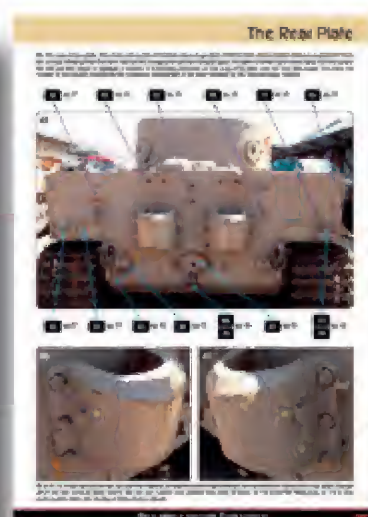
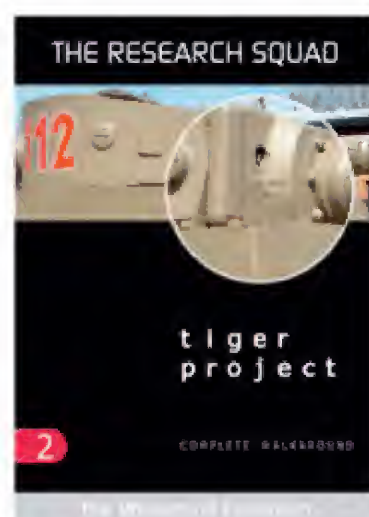
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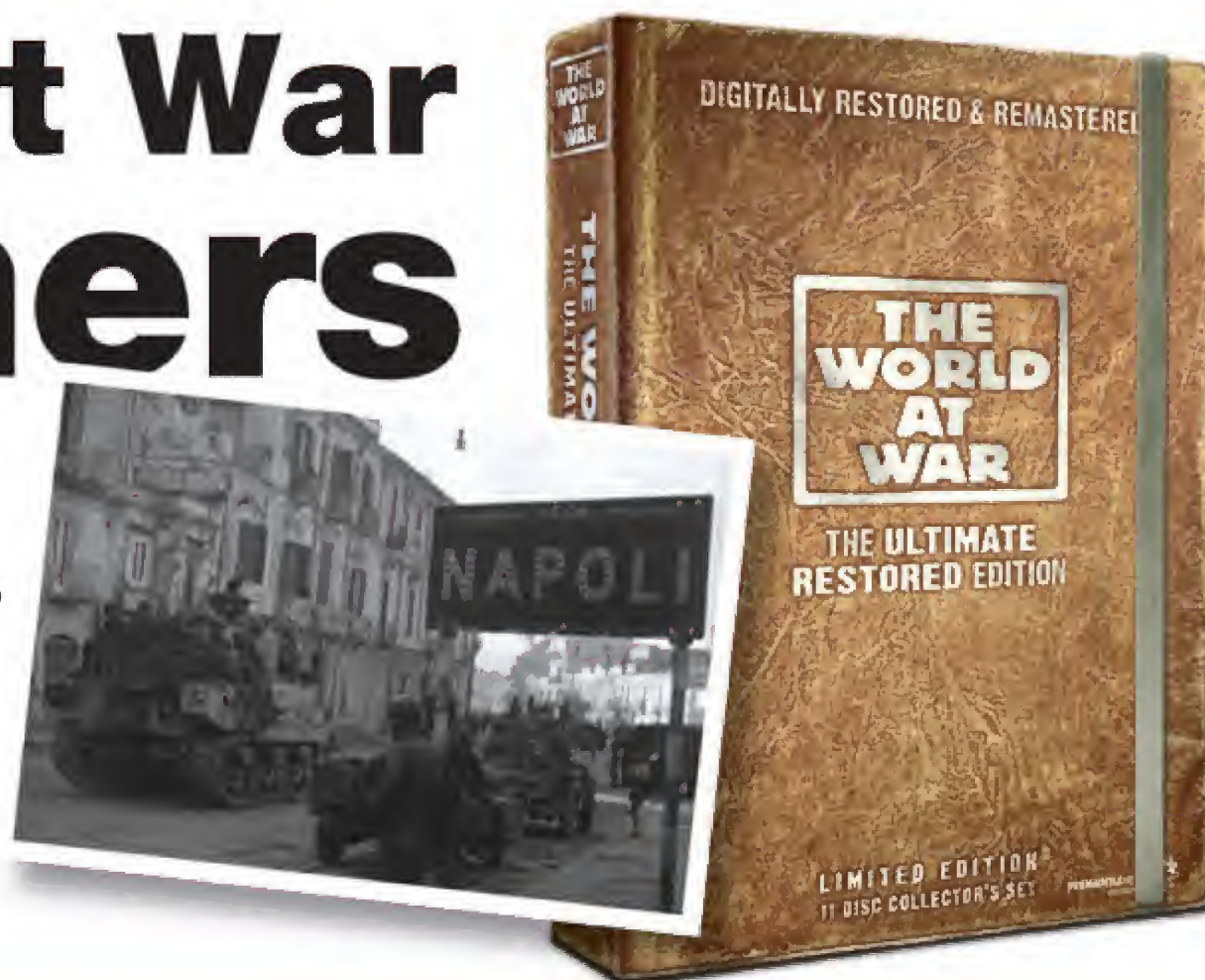
# Readers' Letters

MI readers are invited to write to the Editor. Letters should be addressed to: Tim Newark, Military Illustrated, 3 Barton Buildings, off Queen Square, Bath BA1 2JR. E-mail: [timn@fsmail.net](mailto:timn@fsmail.net)

## World at War Winners

Winners of WORLD AT WAR DVD competition were E Mannion from South Shields, Tyne and Wear and David Butcher from Cadiz, Spain.

The correct answer was: Naples was liberated in 1943.



Cover: British Home Guard training in 1940.

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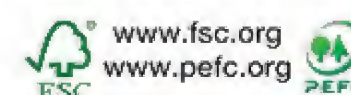
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## Special Forces Medals

A special exhibition of military gallantry awards goes on public display for the first time at the end of March. Although Lord Ashcroft is renowned for his collection of VCs, now on display at the Imperial War Museum, he is less well known for his collection of gallantry awards to the Special Forces, such as the SAS and SBS. A selection of groups of medals from this collection will be shown in public for the first time in a loan exhibition at the BADA (British Antique Dealers' Association) Antiques & Fine Art Fair in London from 23-29 March.



DCM group awarded to Trooper Sekonaia Takavesi of the SAS in Oman.

## French volunteer

I was fascinated by the article on General De Gaulle (MI/273) as my French mother worked for the Free French at his Headquarters in Carlton House Terrace until I was born. A few years ago I donated all her papers to the Imperial War Museum, including one of her diaries that had, amongst the telephone numbers of friends and family, three distinguished numbers—namely 'HM the King', 'Mr. Churchill' and 'General de Gaulle'.

I am not able to contradict article author Charles Stuart when he states that no French sailors wanted to join the Free French. I am able to say that at least one Frenchman joined the British Royal Navy. He was my godfather, Maurice Vincent from Boulogne sur Mer, who rose to the rank of Chief Petty Officer. He served throughout the war in the Submarine Service. A photograph of him in RN uniform is in the family archives.

Claude R Hart, Shrewsbury

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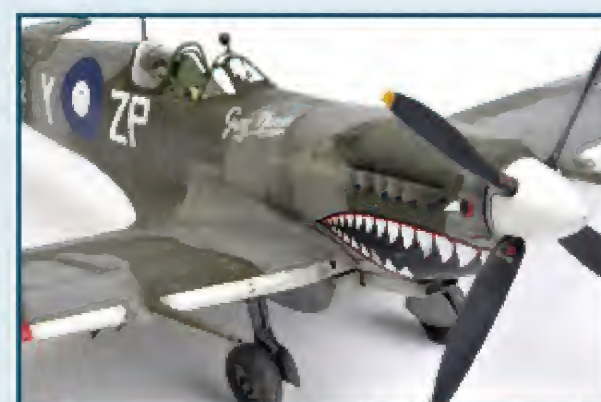
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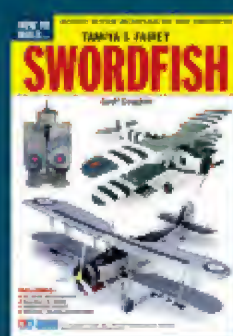
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Leader Oswald Mosley inspecting women supporters at British Union of Fascists parade.

# THE ENEMY WITHIN

With Hitler's war machine crushing all resistance, the British government feared that Nazi sympathisers within the British population might help the expected invasion. STEPHEN CULLEN uncovers the reality of the Fifth Column threat to the UK.



**O**n the night of 2 June 1940, Local Defence Volunteers (LDV) shot and killed four motorists in separate locations in Britain. On 12 June, the commanding officer of the 2nd Anti-Aircraft Division wrote to GHQ Home Forces to complain that the LDV had killed one of his officers, and seriously injured another. Before the month was out, the LDV had added to its tally of innocent fellow citizens, shooting two motorcyclists and their passengers in separate incidents in the north of England and in Scotland, an ARP warden in Gloucestershire, a motorist in Newport, and, in a particularly serious incident in Romford, killing four people and seriously wounding another travelling together in a car. It seemed that few people were safe from the newly created LDV. RAF pilots baling out of aircraft were attacked, as were others in uniform.

### Suspicion and fear

The degree of suspicion and fear that was felt by much of the population in the aftermath of the German blitzkrieg on the west in 1940 was typified by the experience of one teenage member of the Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS). Francis Codd joined the AFS in 1938, during the build up to war. He was in the River Service of the London Fire Brigade, and took part in the evacuations from Dunkirk on the fireboat *Massey Shaw*. The fireboat had returned from a trip to Dunkirk, and some of the crew were given 24 hours leave before they returned to the evacuation. Codd decided to take the bus home to Ramsgate to see his mother, but, instead, he met some keen volunteers in the LDV.

'I was wearing the reefer jacket of the Auxiliary Fireman, and the dark trousers,' remembered Codd. 'I had an open-necked, white tennis shirt, and my cap, and I'd got white plimsolls. I was extremely sunburnt, and my hair, being fair, almost bleached, almost white, and was a bit long and unruly. When I got to Sandwich, on my way back to Ramsgate, I thought, well, I must have a walk round in the hour I've got to wait between buses; walk around the town, and have a look at the churches. And there is one big church, I'm not sure if it is called St Clement's, a particularly fine church. So, I walked towards it, and stood in the churchyard, looking up at the old flint tower, and admiring it on this calm, beautiful summer evening, and suddenly I was pounced on by two enormous men, and I didn't know what had happened.

'They didn't seem to be hurting me, but their obvious enmity towards me was a bit

off-putting. They said "Feel him for guns!" Anyway, they frisked me, the only time in my life I have been frisked. They looked in my pockets – nothing incriminating. They said "We have a lot of German spies, you know, and we're not satisfied". And I said, 'I'm not a German spy'. They said "Well, we think you might be. You look German!" And I said, "I don't. This is my standard uniform, I've been to Dunkirk". They said, "Well, that's your story!" Anyway, I argued and remonstrated with them for some time. I said, "I've got a bus ticket". But, they said "Come along to the police station".'

Expecting to be exonerated by the police, Codd was surprised to find that they, too, did not believe that he was in the AFS. They telephoned the headquarters of the London Fire Brigade to find out if there really was an AFS man in Sandwich, but, such was their paranoia, the police would not tell the fire brigade what Codd's name was. This, of course, meant that the London Fire Brigade could not confirm Codd's story. Eventually, he was taken, under police escort, to London Fire Brigade HQ, where his bona fides were confirmed, before he returned again to Dunkirk.

The LDV shootings, the 'arrest' of an AFS man between trips to Dunkirk, and the paranoia of the Sandwich police were just part of the Fifth Column panic that broke out in the UK in 1940. That panic resulted from incomprehension at the speed of German military successes in the west, the desire of Britain's secret security forces to extend their own role, press hysteria, particularly on the part of 'The Daily Mail' and 'The Daily Express', German radio broadcasts, and fear of the real, and imagined foreign links of British fascists and communists. For many people, in government, the military, and in the population at large, the invasions of Norway and the Netherlands seemed to have established a new pattern of warfare, with invaders being guaranteed success by the existence of pro-German domestic conspiracies.

### Enemy within

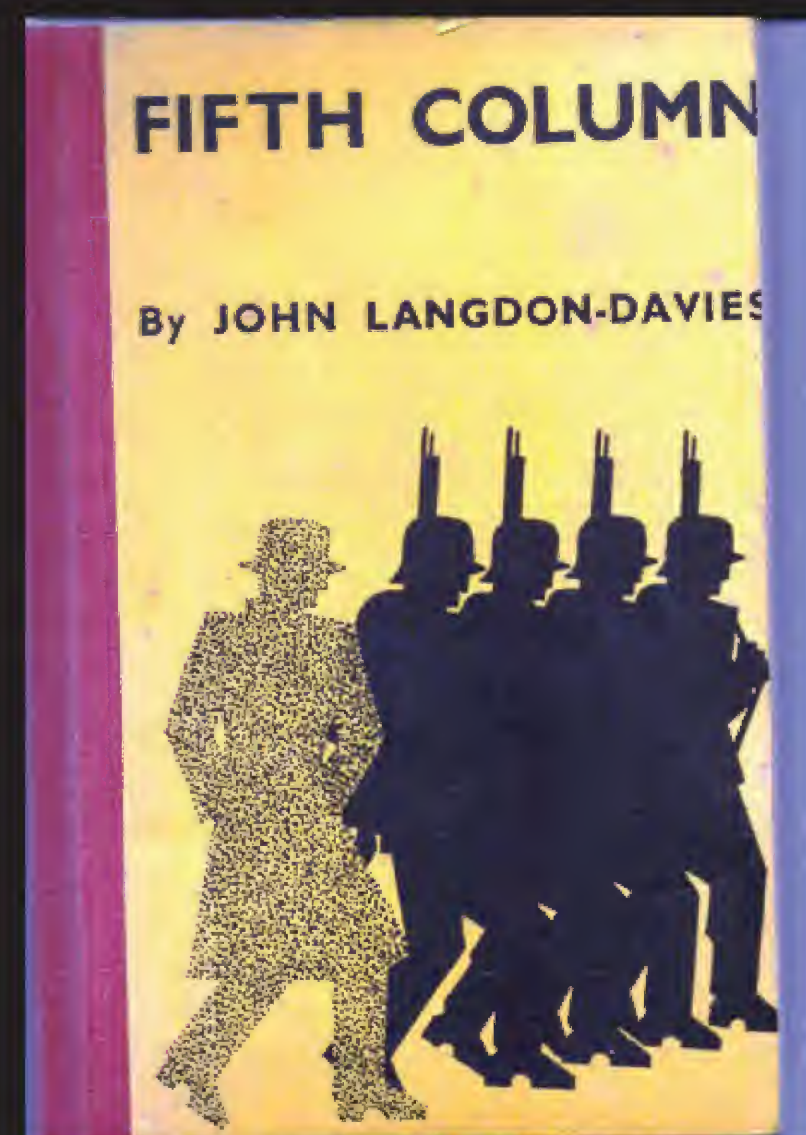
Fear of the 'enemy within' was nothing new. In Britain, the 18th century had seen the government threatened by Jacobites at home, while the French Revolution created a fear of a domestic threat from British Jacobins. Furthermore, British-German rivalry in the late 19th century led to fears that German agents, popularly believed to be working as waiters and barbers in London, were preparing the way for a lightning descent of the Kaiser's forces on

the UK. But, in 1936, a new term entered the lexicon of conspiracy and treason – the Fifth Column.

Following the botched coup attempt by Nationalist Spanish generals, Spain was pock-marked by areas under their control, while most of the country was still in the hands of the Republican government. However, rebel troops were quickly moved, with Mussolini's help, across the straits of Gibraltar, and the civil war began in earnest. The Nationalist General Mola announced that four military columns were advancing on Madrid, but that there was also a Fifth Column within the city. This Fifth Column consisted of supporters of the Nationalist rebellion, and their



An arrested fascist is led away by Special Branch officers in the summer of 1940.



Cover of John Langdon-Davies' book on the Fifth Column, published in 1940, which drew on his experiences in the Spanish Civil War and defined the threat to the UK.





**British Fascist links with Nazi Germany—members of the British Union of Fascists, including a very heavily decorated veteran of the Great War, at a Nazi Party rally before the war.**

role was to spread confusion among the defenders, sabotage vital installations, and act as spies and assassins. Madrid did not, in fact, fall to Franco and the Nationalists until the very end of the Spanish Civil War, but the fear of the Fifth Column, more so than its reality, created a climate of terror within the Republican zone. That fed into the already existent hatreds and tensions that existed, not just between supporters of Franco and the Republic, but also between different Republican factions. The result was widespread killings, arrests, imprisonments, and fighting between supposed allies against Franco. Most notably in Barcelona in May 1937, when the anarchists, accused by pro-Stalinist communists of being part of Franco's Fifth Column, were crushed in heavy fighting.

The Spanish experience seemed to be confirmed by the German attacks on Norway and the Netherlands in April and May, 1940. The confusion surrounding the German seizure of Oslo, when Norwegian coastal defence batteries sank the German heavy cruiser, *Blücher*, and damaged the pocket battleship, *Lützow*, allowed the Norwegian Nazi, Vidkun Quisling to claim that he was the new head of government, and gave additional strength to the widespread belief in the role of Fifth Columnists. Indeed, from April 1940 onwards, the term 'Quisling' was synonymous with 'Fifth Column', and, eventually, came to supplant it.

In reality, although Quisling had contact with the Nazis prior to the invasion of Norway, neither he nor his

Nasjonal Samling movement had any role to play in the invasion. In fact, the occupying Germans removed Quisling from his self-appointed post, and it was not until February 1942 that he was made 'Minister President' of Norway. Much more significant to the eventual success of the German invasion was their use of paratroopers and air landed forces. The Norwegian coastal defence batteries success against the German seaborne assault on Oslo meant that the seizure of the city depended on the capture of Fornebu airfield, thereby opening the way to airborne reinforcements. It was this aspect of the new German way of war that also characterised their even more successful assault on the Netherlands in the following month, which, once more raised the spectre of the Fifth Column.

German air drops on airfields and key bridges at Moerdijk, Dordrecht, and Waalhaven opened the way for ground forces to advance quickly across the country. But it was the attacks on bridges at Gennepe, Nijmegen, and Roermond that seemed to be the work of Fifth Columnists as well as German troops. German special forces – the Brandenburgers – were tasked with capturing the bridges, and used their men dressed in Dutch army uniforms, apparently guarding German prisoners, to get close to their objectives. But the Dutch defenders saw through this ruse de guerre at Roermond and Nijmegen, and the bridges were destroyed. At Gennepe, however, Dutch-Germans, in Dutch uniforms, did enable the Brandenburgers

to seize the bridge, thereby opening the way for the German 6th Army. This success further enhanced the legend of the Fifth Column that was to inform British attitudes.

### **Enemy Aliens**

UK Cabinet minutes from the period give a clear picture of the nature of the Fifth Column fear in 1940. On 10 May 1940, the War Cabinet was presented with a report, 'Seaborne and Airborne Attack on the United Kingdom', drawn up by the chiefs of staff committee in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Security, in the guise of the Joint Intelligence Committee.

The report was a revised assessment of the threat to the UK 'in the light of the situation created by the German invasion of Denmark and Norway'. There were six conclusions, one of which stated: 'Enemy "Fifth Column" activities will be designed to play a dangerous and important part in any operation which Germany may undertake against this country. The degree to which aliens [in the UK] can be controlled by the authorities and the adequacy of the legal powers which exist to deal with such aliens should be examined and any steps considered necessary to improve the situation should be taken immediately'.

The threat was seen to come from 'aliens' already in the UK, but also those arriving as a result of German conquest in Europe. Although a large proportion of those 'aliens' were Jewish refugees from the Nazis, their likely attitude to their





Well-known motor sports champion, 'Flying Fay' Taylour, is interned at Holloway gaol where she would be held for three years.

persecutors seemed not to be uppermost in the authorities' minds, at least, not at this stage in the war. However, the threat from 'sleepers' and agents within the alien population was not deemed to be the only source of potential Fifth Column activity.

In an appendix, the report went on to note: 'The main features of "Fifth Column" activity with which we are confronted in this country appear to be as follows: (a) the presence of 73,000 non-interned enemy aliens and 164,000 non-enemy aliens. In addition, there are recently naturalised British subjects of German origin from selected groups and possessing special qualifications; (b) the British Union of Fascists (8,700 subscribing members, organised in 188 districts, each of which has a leader); (c) the Communist Party of Great Britain (well organised, with 20,000 pledged subscribing members. The Daily Worker circulation is 90,000); (d) the Irish Republican Army (strength in the United Kingdom unknown); (e) miscellaneous organisations and individuals and crews of ships'.

Interestingly, these notes about possible threats were not particularly accurate. For example, the details of the BUF (which was known as the British Union by this time) and the CPGB, were inaccurate, and the strength of the IRA was, in Northern Ireland at least, reasonably well known. Furthermore, point (e) was something of a catch-all, which, if the apparent experience of Belgium was to go by, would, according to the report's authors,

include, for some reason, 'horticulturalists and florists'. It was, however, acknowledged that there were difficulties in intelligence gathering, and the report noted that 'direct evidence [of the Fifth Column] is difficult to find', yet still stated that it was 'probable that the enemy has an organisation drawn from members of the above categories which would act in his support at the appropriate moment, as in other invaded countries'.

### Disloyal activities

Despite the tentative nature of the supposed intelligence on the Fifth Column, at the end of May 1940, a Home Defence (Security) Executive was set up under Lord Swinton (who had executive control of MI5) to co-ordinate action against the Fifth Column. The perception that aliens and refugees, and members of 'subversive organisations' (particularly the British Union and the CPGB) represented the most serious potential Fifth Column threat led to the Chiefs of Staff Committee to recommend to the war cabinet that 'the most ruthless action should be taken [including] internment of all enemy aliens and all members of subversive organisations, which latter should be proscribed'.

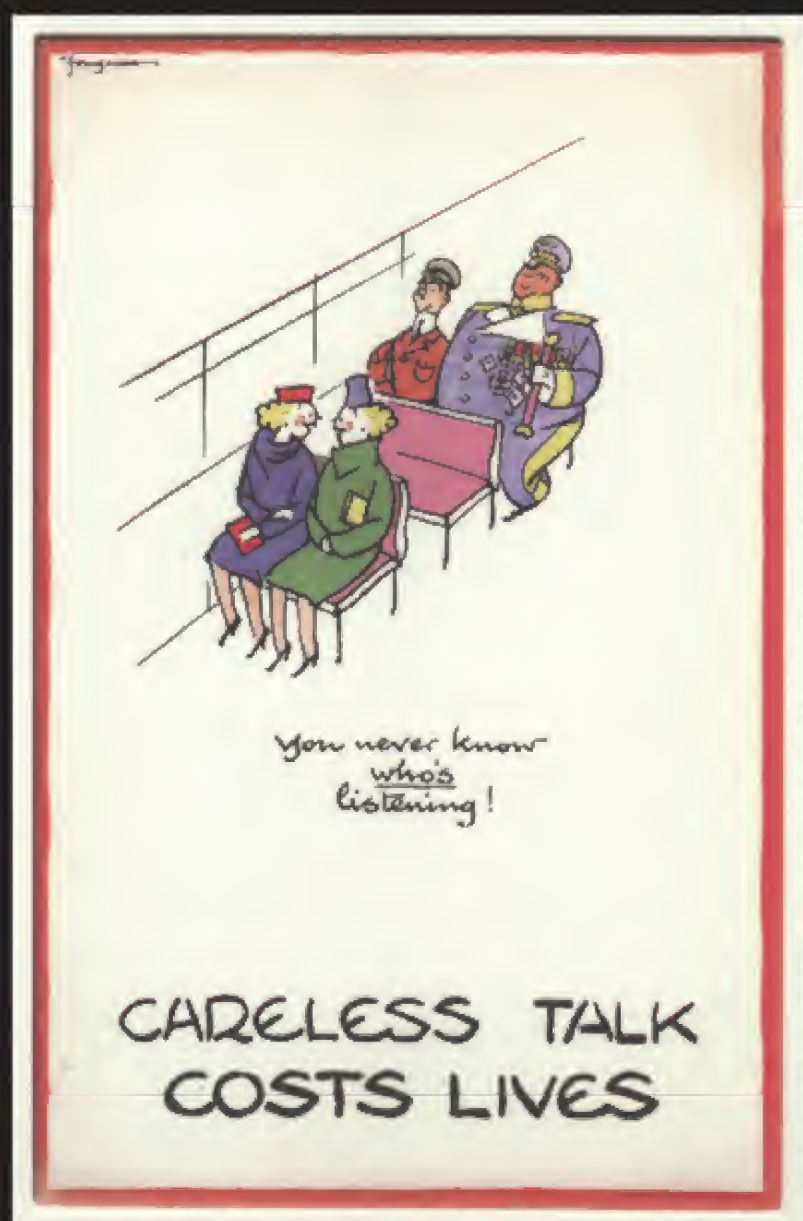
A week earlier, at a war cabinet meeting of 18 May, the Home Secretary, Sir John Anderson, had 'regretted that we had already undertaken to receive another 100,000 refugees, but he hoped that this number might be cut down'. At the same meeting, Anderson had also

noted that the difficulty with regard to internment of members of the British Union, or proscribing the movement, was an 'absence of evidence which indicated that the organisation as such was engaged in disloyal activities'.

Despite the lack of evidence against enemy aliens, fascists, and others, the increasingly bad news from France, and pressure from the security services, meant that Churchill's view was that it was 'important that a very large round-up of enemy aliens and suspect persons' be carried out. In the event, this is what happened, and by July 1940, some 27,000 people had been interned without charge or trial. The overwhelming majority of these internees were innocent, long-term residents in the UK, or political or Jewish refugees from Nazism. Later, many of these people would go on to serve in the British armed forces, making their own contribution to the defeat of Nazism. But, for others, internment meant hardship for families left behind, and the stigma that came from the fact that they had been imprisoned.

In some areas, internment was prefaced by attacks by mobs on Italian or German owned businesses. This was particularly the case in Scotland, where anti-Italian violence had a religious edge to it. Most internees ended up on the Isle of Man, which became a prison island, as it had in the Great War, but some were shipped to Australia and Canada. One of these shipments, on the 'Arandora Star', ended in tragedy, when the ship was torpedoed and sunk, with the





Warning against 'careless talk' in wartime poster by Fougasse in 1940.



Among the British Italian residents held in Manx internment camps were members of the Italian Fascist Party who attempted to maintain control over their compatriots.



In addition to the internment of thousands of refugees and enemy aliens, fascists were also interned. This is a hand painted menu card to mark a year of internment for British Union members on the Isle of Man. The view is over Peel harbour, where the fascists were held in requisitioned houses and hotels on the promenade.

loss of nearly 500 Italian and 175 German internees. In addition to the enemy aliens, over 1,000 members of the British Union (BU) were interned, and the movement was proscribed. By contrast, although individual communists were interned, the CPGB remained legal, and there was no move to intern its leadership cadres. The feeling was that the CPGB would be more dangerous if it was forced underground, something that

the party had, indeed, made plans to do if it was proscribed.

Despite all this activity, it was not long before the government began to realise that the Fifth Column threat was less real than had been imagined. As early as 17 May 1940, the War Cabinet heard a report by the Home Secretary on the Fifth Column's role in the defeat of the Netherlands. It was widely believed that it was in the Netherlands that all elements that made up a Fifth Column, including Dutch civilians, had given widespread help to German airborne forces.

Yet, Sir John Anderson reported: 'I have had the advantage of a long interview with the Dutch Minister of Justice, a civilian official of that Ministry, and two Dutch military officers. While it is clear that the German troops arriving in Holland, whether by parachute or by troop-carrying aircraft received invaluable assistance from persons resident in the country, my Dutch informants were very emphatic that for the most part this help was given, in accordance with a pre-arranged scheme, by Nazi Germans resident in Holland. They had no evidence that such assistance had been given by the refugee element in the German population, and they said that comparatively little help had been given, at any rate until a late stage, by Dutchmen who were members of the NSB (the Dutch Fascist Party)'.

From the Dutch point of view, it was clear that they saw the key, if not the main, element of Fifth Column activity as being 'Nazi Germans' already in the Netherlands. Refugees, and, to a lesser extent, native fascists, were not seen to be part of the threat. In fact, even the Fifth Column activity that was identified in the conversations with the British Home Secretary was, in reality, very limited. It was this combination of a generalised fear that appeared to be based upon the reality of German operations in Europe, and the shortage of hard evidence of a widespread Fifth Column conspiracy in the UK, that led the security forces to put much effort into establishing that such a threat did, in fact, exist.

### Spies and Americans

Opinions over the use of widespread internment without trial were divided in Whitehall. The Home Office stressed that such a measure could have counter-productive effects and convince the population of large that there was, indeed, a full-blown Fifth Column in its midst. This might have implications for morale and public order. Furthermore, there was the question of civil liberties, and the sense

that certain traditional norms, particularly habeas corpus, should not be overturned lightly. By contrast, the secret security service lobby were keen to extend their influence over government policy, and obtain as much in the way of resources as possible.

To this end, MI5, and especially its Counter Espionage Division, under Guy Liddell, used a range of tactics to exaggerate whatever threats they could identify. Foremost in this process of creating an atmosphere of fear of a Fifth Column in government circles was Maxwell Knight, who ran MI5's agents and moles in right wing groups. Knight himself had been an MI5 plant in the British Fascisti (BF), which he had joined in 1924, remaining with this early British fascist party until 1930. Despite Knight's later accounts, it is clear that, although he was working for MI5 at this time, he was strongly attracted to the views of the BF. Whatever his real sympathies, Knight's role in the 1920s gave him the experience and the contacts he needed to infiltrate far right groups in 1939-40. It was then that he was able to take advantage of the activities of a cipher clerk, Tyler Kent, at the US Embassy, to create a situation that MI5 was able to use to its advantage in the Whitehall struggle for influence.

Tyler Kent had been in the US foreign service since 1934, when he was posted, as a junior clerk, to the American embassy in Moscow. Following the outbreak of war, Kent was transferred to the US embassy in London, at that time headed by Ambassador Joseph Kennedy, who was anti-British, and believed by the spring of 1940 that the UK would have to agree to a negotiated peace with Hitler. Tyler Kent's job at the embassy included coding and decoding US cable and radio traffic. At this point, the London embassy acted as a hub for all US embassy communications between Washington and its European embassies. For some reason, Kent began to collect copies of these documents, which he stored at his flat.

While doing this, Kent became convinced that the US and British governments were secretly conspiring to bring the US into the war in Europe, even though the stated policy of Roosevelt's administration in the run up to the November 1940 Presidential election was to keep the US out of the conflict. Kent had a wide and active social life, and, with his fluent Russian and knowledge of conditions in the USSR, he quickly made friends in the Russian émigré community. One of these was the Russian born Anna Wolkoff, whom Kent met in February



1940. Wolkoff, like Kent, believed that the war was a Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy. Further, Wolkoff was a member of the ultra-right group, the Right Club.

Founded by the anti-Semitic Conservative MP for Peebles, Captain Archibald Maule Ramsay, the Right Club was a small political club that argued for Anglo-German friendship. Ramsay officially disbanded the club at the outbreak of the war, but its activists, dominated by middle and upper class women, continued to meet and indulge in low-level, anti-war, propaganda. But unknown to these activists, key members were, in fact, MI5 agents, and, indeed, provocateurs. MI5 became aware that Kent was involved in collecting copies of US embassy documents, and that he knew Anna Wolkoff, to whom he had shown some of the documents.

This gave Maxwell Knight, and MI5, the opening they needed. An MI5 woman agent fed Wolkoff an incriminating letter that she was asked to pass onto yet another Right Club member who was also an MI5 agent. Wolkoff did so, and that act opened the way to the arrest of her and Tyler Kent on 20 May 1940. Wolkoff and Kennedy were tried in secret and received ten and seven years penal servitude respectively. But, for MI5, the real success was that the Tyler Kent affair enabled them to draw more people into the internment net, and strengthen their case regarding the Fifth Column threat. On the back of the affair, internment was extended, and hundreds of fascists, Oswald Mosley included, and others, like Captain Ramsay, found themselves behind wire.

### Flying Fay Taylour

One of those interned in the aftermath of the Tyler Kent affair was Frances Helen 'Fay' Taylour. As 'Flying Fay', she was a world famous motor sports star, and the most successful woman motorbike and car racing driver ever. Her successes across the world had made her a household name, and led to her being banned from racing against men on many tracks. She led a peripatetic life, but a week before the outbreak of war, she returned to London. In October 1939, she was reported by a neighbour to the police, for making anti-war statements.

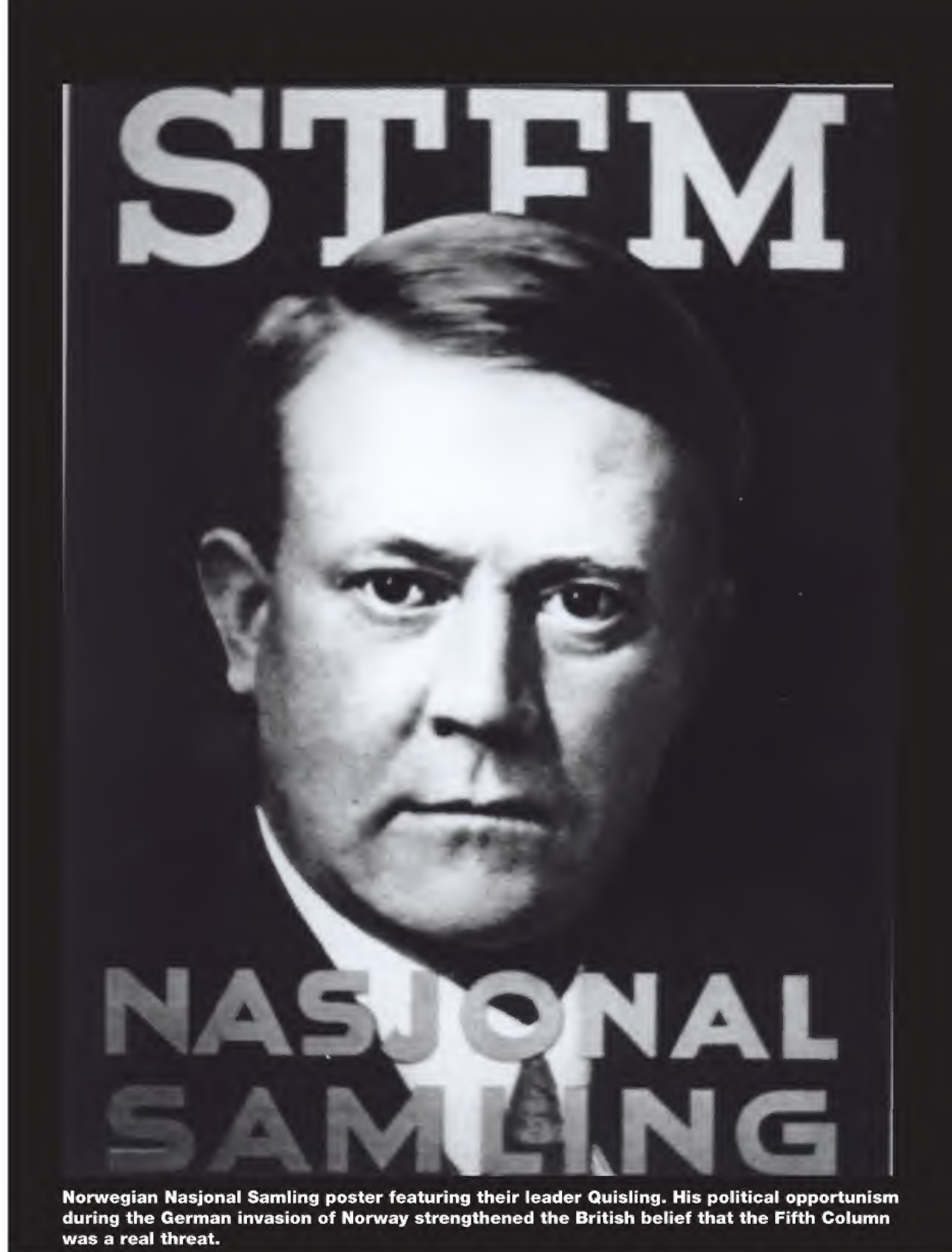
As a result, Taylour was questioned by Special Branch, and an MI5 file was opened on her, a file that would not be closed until 1976. Taylour, in turn, joined the British Union, which announced in its press that she had put her services behind the peace campaign. Then, at some point,

she became linked to the Right Club. Her fame, and her outspokenness, made her a target for the security services. Her correspondence was intercepted, her conversations eavesdropped, and a close watch was kept on her. She may well have also been the target of MI5 provocateurs activity. She was involved in a disturbance in Hyde Park, shortly before she was interned, which she described as being the result of a pre-arranged incident.

'My arrest [her internment], apart from my views, could well have been prompted by a Communist frame-up to which I was a victim six days earlier,' recalled Taylour. 'British Union was anathema to the Communists just as Communism was corrosive venom and openly opposed by British Union. It was Sunday afternoon and I'd been walking through Hyde Park with friends reaching Marble Arch about 4.30pm where we intended to exit and find a tea shop. Suddenly, in front of me, out of the crowds gathered to

hear the soap box orators at the corner, sprang a disreputable-looking man and woman, and the man tore the little British Union brooch I was wearing out of my rain coat. Immediately, two policemen from behind grabbed the man [Taylour's friend] who was walking beside me, but at that moment the disreputable man and woman who had receded popped up again from the front and pointed at me. The policemen then transferred their grip to me, jogging my elbows and marching me off to the police station in the middle of the park, disregarding protests from me and my friends.'

Taylour was released, only to be interned on 1 June 1940. She was regarded as a particularly dangerous pro-German, and she was held until October 1943, when she was released, but only on condition that she resided in Dublin. As an Irishwoman, this was seen as a solution to the problem of what to do with her, but one that was not problem-free, for Taylour



Norwegian Nasjonal Samling poster featuring their leader Quisling. His political opportunism during the German invasion of Norway strengthened the British belief that the Fifth Column was a real threat.





**Frank Ryan, IRA man, volunteer for the Spanish Republic, and German asset.**



**Fearful Home Guard—seen here practising throwing grenades with empty bottles—shot and killed a number of innocent people at roadblocks in the summer of 1940, suspecting they might be German agents.**

had a number of friends in Ireland, including the politically active pro-Franco priest, Father Denis Fahey. Indeed, the issue of Celtic nationalism was another aspect of the Fifth Column panic.

### **Irish threat**

On 3 September 1939, the IRA shot and wounded a British soldier in Belfast – it was the Republican movement's response to the UK's declaration of war on Germany. The same day, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) activated the force's reserve – the B Specials of the Ulster Special Constabulary (USC) – and put them on patrol and road checkpoint duties. This move was taken as much to pre-empt any increase in Republican activity, than as an anti-invasion step, which was, at that stage, something that was not envisaged.

When, in May 1940, the LDV was formed, as part of the response to the deteriorating military situation in Europe, Northern Ireland proved to be the most prepared part of the UK. It quickly created the Ulster Defence Volunteers (from April 1941, the Ulster Home Guard—UHG), and rapidly armed and uniformed them, making them part of the organisational structure of the RUC. The ability to create such a force, of over 25,000 men, was, in part, a result of the recent history of Ireland, and the Stormont government's perception of an already existing internal threat in the shape of the Republican movement. What the new situation added, however, was the fear that the IRA would benefit from German attempts to support the Irish nationalists.

Alone of all the Home Guard in the

UK, the UHG faced a genuine internal security threat, in the form of the IRA. The Germans had hopes that the IRA would act, effectively, as a Fifth Column in Northern Ireland, and the IRA was active. During the 1930s, the IRA had made tentative approaches to both Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, and German agents from the Abwehr were in contact with the IRA in Eire. The IRA carried out a bombing campaign on mainland Britain during 1939, and it was feared that the organisation would act as a Fifth Column should the UK be invaded. Indeed, what might be regarded as Fifth Column tactics were used by the IRA in Northern Ireland in the spring of 1940.

Although the IRA numbered around 300-400 men in Northern Ireland, they were short of weapons, and de Valera's clampdown on the organisation in Eire meant that the Ulster IRA had to rely on its own efforts. A number of IRA men joined the British Army, and five of them who were stationed at Ballykinler Camp were able to ensure the success of an IRA raid for weapons, capturing 200 rifles for the organisation. This use of planted agents to attack from within was just the sort of tactics that were ascribed to the Fifth Column. For their part, the Germans rather ineffectively attempted to infiltrate their agents into both Eire and Northern Ireland. But the authorities on both sides of the border kept a close eye on these attempts, although the German spy, Hans Marchner, escaped with IRA help from internment in Eire.

Attempts were also made to use two key IRA men to act as liaison officers between Germany, the IRA and the

Dublin government. The men were the IRA's Chief of Staff, Sean Russell, and Captain Frank Ryan. Ryan had fought with the International Brigades in Spain, and had been captured by the Spanish Nationalists in March 1938. They, in turn, handed him over to Germany, where he was kept under house arrest. By August 1940, Ryan and Russell were on board the German U-boat, U65. They were to be landed in Eire, and Russell was to contact de Valera with a German offer regarding the use of Eire as a launch pad for an attack on the UK. But Russell died on the submarine, possibly of a perforated ulcer, and Ryan (who did not know of the details of the plan) was taken back to Germany, where he died of natural causes in June 1944.

If grandiose plans involving agents dropped by parachute or landed from submarines made little headway, the IRA in Northern Ireland still made military efforts. At Easter 1942, RUC constable Patrick Murphy was killed in an IRA ambush. Similarly, the IRA killed Constable Patrick Forbes in Dungannon in 1942, and Constable James Laird and Special Constable Samuel Hamilton were both fatally wounded by the IRA at Clady near Strabane. IRA gunmen also killed Special Constable James Lyons in October 1942 and Constable Patrick McCarthy a year later. In addition, the IRA carried out bank raids for funds, arms raids, intelligence gathering, and bomb and gun attacks on RUC and army barracks.

This was a real threat, and, in consequence, the UHG had to be particularly vigilant concerning the





Members of the Breton National Party's combat group, the 'Bagadou stourm', salute their flag. The Germans also tried to take advantage of Celtic nationalists in Ireland and the UK.

securing of weapons. The possibility of IRA attacks also necessitated the carrying of sufficient ammunition during training to defend Home Guard units against surprise attack. For Northern Ireland, the threat of a Fifth Column attack was not, unlike in the rest of the UK, an imaginary threat.

### Scottish nationalists

There were also fears that small numbers of extremist Scottish nationalists would also be willing to act as a pro-German Fifth Column should the UK be invaded. The Germans were aware of this, and in addition to pre-war attempts to make contact with nationalists that they felt might be useful, German radio broadcast 'Radio Caledonia', with a pro-nationalist, anti-war agenda. Some German radio broadcasts, like the 'Workers Challenge Station', and the 'New British Broadcasting Station', purported to be broadcasting from within the UK, as clandestine British radio stations. This was a case of the Germans taking advantage of the real benefit of the Fifth Column idea—that of spreading fear, confusion, misinformation, and black propaganda. But, there were also some Scottish nationalists who wanted to go further.

In 1940, the homes of 16 Scottish nationalists were raided by the authorities. Most of the nationalists were connected with fringe groups like the United Scottish Movement, and the Scottish Socialist

(1940) Party, but also included was Ronald E Muirhead, the Honorary President of the Scottish National Party (SNP). During the raids, the police recovered from one house guns, ammunition, nazi and fascist propaganda, and a letter from the German agent, Dr von Teffenar, who had been active in Scotland before the war. Another of those raided, arrested, and temporarily interned was Arthur Donaldson, chair of United Scotland, and a member of the anti-conscription group, the Nationalist Mutual Aid Society, and one of the founding fathers of Scottish nationalism.

Donaldson had been expelled from the SNP in 1940 for his championing of a strong anti-war policy, but he became the party's leader in the 1960s. Donaldson was closely watched by MI5, and one of his closest confidantes was an MI5 officer, Dick Brooman-White. It was this officer who reported, in January 1941, that Donaldson claimed to have many supporters in the SNP, and that he believed that the Germans would successfully invade the UK. Donaldson said that in the event of the invasion the UK government would flee the country, and 'England's position would be absolutely hopeless'. As a result, Donaldson envisaged setting up a Vichy-style regime in Scotland.

The tiny number of Scots who hoped for a German invasion of the UK, and the chance to create a puppet Scottish nationalist state were always under the surveillance of the security forces, and,

in the event of invasion, would have been arrested, while their countrymen fought to defend Scotland and the UK. However, had the country been successfully occupied by the Germans, there is every likelihood that they would have encouraged the Celtic nationalists, and any other group that offered the chance to divide and rule the British peoples.

This was certainly the pattern in other areas of occupied Europe. The most pertinent example being that of Brittany, where other Celtic nationalists were supported by the occupiers, and fought the French resistance. In the aftermath of the French defeat in the summer of 1940, Breton nationalists formed the National Breton Committee to push for 'independence' for Brittany under the Nazis. The Breton National Party also campaigned for this, and, eventually, as the French resistance movement grew, the two came into conflict. The killing of a leading Breton nationalist, Er Perrot, by the resistance, led, in turn, to the creation of a German sponsored Breton militia – the Milice Perrot ('Bezenn Perrot' in Breton). This opened the way to a vicious civil war in Brittany. Other ethnic nationalist groups also flourished under German occupation, the most famous in Western Europe being the Flemings •

*Stephen Cullen is the author of the forthcoming 'In Search of the Real Dad's Army' (Pen & Sword Books).*





# *Blood on the Sands*

With Europe in flames as Napoleon smashed one major power after another, Britain became embroiled in a war with the Ottoman Turkish Empire. STUART HADAWAY reveals how this sideshow went badly wrong.



**B**y 1806, Egypt was in turmoil. The French invasion of 1798-1801 had seen the ruling class of Mamelukes usurped and heavily defeated. Reinforcements had poured in from across the ramshackle Ottoman Empire, but many of the national contingents bought in had seen opportunity in the ruin. After the defeat of the French in 1801, and the withdrawal of the British garrisons in 1803, the country had descended entirely into chaos and civil war.

Soon one faction in particular was gaining prominence. Muhammed Ali had come to Egypt as a subordinate officer of the Albanian contingent, but on the death of the commander had risen to lead them. He had played a clever political as well as military game, and had grown in popular support and strength. His ambitions did not stop at ruling Egypt—he intended to declare independence. But he knew that an independent Egypt was not feasible without political and social reform, and the development of overseas trade based on internal industry. His eyes were on the long game, but in the short term he needed to complete the defeat of the Mamelukes and the other remaining factions in the country.

### British fear

Almost as soon as their garrisons withdrew, the British had begun to worry about the stability of the country they had left behind. Egypt was strategically important, straddling the over-land route to India, a source of not only British wealth, but also the invaluable, superior-quality saltpetre they used for gunpowder. The fear was that either the continuing civil war or victory by an unfriendly faction would block this route, or, worse still, let the French back in. In February 1804, they decided to send in their own candidate for power, Mahommed Bey al-Alfi. Al-Alfi had visited Britain, met the King, and generally underwhelmed everyone he met. However, he was the only option available.

Al-Alfi was landed back in Egypt, but was soon defeated and fleeing to seek sanctuary with the desert tribes along the Upper Nile in southern Egypt. In fairness to al-Alfi, he re-emerged to fight again even after Ali was declared Governor by Constantinople in June 1805. Increasingly worried, Britain now began laying heavy political pressure on the Ottomans, and in

1806 they were persuaded to declare al-Alfi as Governor. However, one of the conditions was that al-Alfi sent a substantial bribe, or rather, tax to Constantinople to seal the deal. When he failed to do so, and Ali managed to not only trump the promised amount but also deliver it promptly, they changed their minds and reinstated Ali. With his appointment rescinded, short on money, and with provisions low, al-Alfi's troops mutinied and he fled once again. On 30 January 1807, he died of a sudden illness.

The British were now getting increasingly twitchy about the situation, especially as events on the larger European scene were beginning to come into play as well. In late 1805, the Third Coalition against Napoleon had been torn to bloody shreds at Austerlitz. A Fourth Coalition had quickly been formed, but the equally swift defeat and occupation of Prussia had left Russia painfully exposed. Napoleon was now bringing all possible pressure to bear, and saw Russia's southern border with the Ottoman Empire as a weak spot. He sent his old friend and fellow-Corsican Horace Sebastiani, who had been severely wounded and promoted to General at Austerlitz, to be French ambassador at the Sublime Porte in Constantinople. He had served in a diplomatic role in Constantinople before, during Napoleon's earlier campaign in Egypt, and knew the lay of the land. His role was now to persuade the Ottomans to come into the war on France's side, or at least turn them against Russia. He lobbied for the closure of the Dardanelles, the narrow passage between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, to Russian and British shipping, and the granting of exclusive rights to the French.

### Show of force

In late 1806, Sebastiani succeeded. The Dardanelles was closed, and the Russians provoked into attacking Ottoman territories along the Danube. War was declared on 30 December, and fighting flared across their joint borders, forcing an already hard-pressed Russia to divert men and supplies from the war against Napoleon. In imminent danger of collapse, Russia appealed to Britain for help, and they in turn began applying pressure to Constantinople to come to terms. But French influence was now definitely prevalent in the Sublime Porte, and it was decided that a

show of force was needed.

It was decided to make a two-pronged demonstration against the Ottoman Empire. The northern prong would consist of the Royal Navy sending a force up the Dardanelles, and offering a final ultimatum to Sultan Selim III. If it was refused, they were to bombard this ancient city until terms were agreed. The southern prong would see



**Admiral Sir John Duckworth, commander of the British fleet in the Dardanelles.**

a British army being landed in Egypt to seize and secure Alexandria, which was reckoned to be the most pro-British and strategically important part of the country. With urgent action needed, neither plan would be properly thought through and both had serious flaws.

The northern prong had received some small preparatory work. In November 1806, Sir Thomas Louis had been despatched from Cadiz to make a reconnaissance up the Dardanelles to Constantinople. Based on the information he supplied, in January 1807, Admiral Sir John Duckworth set sail from Cadiz with eight ships of the line, two frigates, two bombships and one transport. They arrived at the base of the Dardanelles on 10 February, where they were supposed to have met four Russian ships of the line. However, the Russians had not appeared and Duckworth, feeling that time was of the essence, set sail. His orders were to proceed to Constantinople and make contact with the British ambassador, Mr Arbuthnot.

Arbuthnot would make another attempt to sway the Sultan, with the fleet adding weight to his words, and if





France had invaded Egypt in 1798, and it had taken three years of hard fighting to neutralise the threat. In 1806, Britain feared a repetition of this war.

he failed, they would then bombard the city. Duckworth was not to know that Arbuthnot and his staff had already fled the city under the cover of darkness nearly two weeks before, and would be unavailable to undertake the diplomatic part of the mission. The French were now ascendant in the Sultan's court, and defensive measures were already being drawn up to stop the British fleet. Duckworth was about to discover just how deadly these measures would be.

### Jaws of Hell

After a week of waiting for the right winds, the fleet set sail on the 19 February. They had already lost one ship of the line, HMS Ajax, which had caught fire and exploded on the 15 February. After this bad start, few in the expedition were unmoved by the thought of what was to come. Royal Marine officer Marmaduke Wybourn, a veteran of many battles, wrote home: 'We are all panic struck, only 8 sail of the line and two frigates and two bombs, to threaten the Capital of the greatest power on earth with 20 sail of the line, innumerable frigates, and small men of war in the Port [sic], with an Army of upwards of 300,000 Men.'

In fact, Wybourn was slightly over-exaggerating those dangers he listed. At that time, the Ottomans had only 12 ships of the line and nine frigates at Constantinople, none of them were ready for sea, although there was a smaller fleet active in the Sea of

Marmara. However, he had ignored what would be the most formidable challenge—the fortifications along the Dardanelles. Nearly 40 miles long, the waterway was four miles across at its widest, but usually considerably less. Each side was heavily fortified, and as the fleet navigated its careful way up the straits, they would be entirely at the mercy of the Ottoman gunners.

Wybourn later described how that day they 'passed the Jaws of Death through a vortex of fire, & apparent inevitable destruction.' Over 700 guns battered the fleet from either side. Most were heavy by any standard – 40 to 60 pounds in weight, but the Ottomans also possessed truly monster cannon able to fire marble or granite balls of 500 or even up to 700 pounds in weight. 'Ships were cut to pieces in their Ropes, Masts, and rigging,' and all needed repairs by the time they reach the mouth of the Sea of Marmara at the far end of the straits. Here they engaged ten men of war, anchored broadside across their path, but from surprise as much as anything they overpowered them. Four were captured, but Duckworth ordered them destroyed, denying the prizes to his crews. The others were run ashore and also destroyed, while landing parties from the ships that had already cleared the gauntlet managed to attack some of the strait's batteries from behind, easing the pressure on their comrades bringing up the rear.

Duckworth's fleet regrouped in the Sea of Marmara at 4.00pm, having entered the straits at 7.30am that morning. They now carried out running repairs before proceeding to Constantinople. As they approached the Sublime Porte, the element of surprise was truly on their side. The defences on the Dardanelles had been deemed sufficient to stop any attacking force, and the British fleet sailing into view created panic.

Wybourn recalled how, when 'we arrived before the port of the Capital, there was not a gun hardly to oppose us, the Town was in an uproar & flags of truce' were being flown. Although the Ottoman fleet was still in port, they were unprepared. Without Arbuthnot to serve as intermediary, Duckworth had to wait for an Ottoman envoy to row out to his flagship. Nearly two weeks of negotiations now followed, but Duckworth began to realise that the Ottomans were simply playing for time.

By the end of February, shore parties collecting water began to bring back rumours of Ottoman movements. Twelve thousand troops and volunteers were said to be massing with a thousand small gunboats to assault and board the fleet. Hundreds of guns were said to be hidden in the city, ready to open fire. The dozen ships of the line and nine frigates in the harbour were preparing to make sail. By the 2 March some of these preparations became evident, and at dusk ten fireships were





**Mameluke warrior, early 19th century. Formidable in the attack, firing their guns before closing with swords, this professional warrior caste had been Egypt's rulers until Napoleon arrived, but were now losing the civil war in 1807. Painting by Ed Dovey.**

seen being towed from the harbour. That night, Duckworth ordered his fleet to retire back into the Marmara Sea, and the next morning they ran back through the Dardanelles gauntlet.

By now, the batteries along the straits had been strengthened and reinforced, much of it under the personal supervision of Sebastiani and his staff. Heavy fire again tore through the British warships. Next day, Wybourn would write home that: 'I often thought I had seen service, but every shot I have seen for twelve years past, would not amount to half fired yesterday.'

By evening, the battered fleet had emerged back into the Mediterranean, to be met by the Russian ships they had been expecting a fortnight before. The Russians wanted to combine forces and re-enter the straits, but

Duckworth refused. His ships were badly damaged, with HMS Repulse 'crippled beyond repairing at sea'. One ball alone, reckoned to be over 500lbs in weight, had smashed through the ship near the wheel, killing a dozen men and wounding nine more. All that Duckworth had to show for his efforts were one ship lost, all of the others needing repair, in at least one case in port, and some 300 men killed or wounded. Not even a single prize had been taken. Having failed in all of their objectives, those of the fleet fit to do so set sail south, to connect with the southern prong in Egypt.

### **Dangerous game**

While the Royal Navy had been engaged in a futile passage through the Dardanelles straits, a British army was

landing in Egypt under the command of General Alexander Mackenzie-Fraser. Drawn from the strategic reserves being held in Sicily, all that could be spared were some 5-6,000 men, over a third of whom were foreign troops of potentially suspect reliability. De Roll's Regiment had originally been Swiss and the Chasseurs Britanniques French émigrés, but now most of the rank and file came from all over Europe, including deserters from Napoleon's armies. Half a battalion of Sicilian troops were also present, as were four battalions of British infantry, 200 gunners and less than 80 men from the 20th Light Dragoons.

It was hardly a formidable force, but their task was only ever envisaged as the seizure of Alexandria. At least, this was the only clear part of Mackenzie-Fraser's orders, which were dangerously vague. The British counsel in Egypt, Major Ernest Missett, assured the army that this was enough to bolster the pro-British element in the country and deter the French from taking a hand in matters. Unfortunately, as we shall see, Missett was playing his own dangerous game.

General Mackenzie-Fraser arrived off Alexandria on 16 March with only 19 of the 33 transports with which he had left Sicily, carrying just 2,000 men. On their first night at sea a storm had scattered the convoy, and these were all that could be gathered. He began to land his troops the next day just to the west of Alexandria, having been assured by Missett that resistance would be token at best. Certainly the landing was not opposed, although rough seas put a stop to the operation on the morning of 18 March after only a thousand men had landed.

With Missett pressing for action, Mackenzie-Fraser decided to approach the city with what few troops he had, and came under fire from the western walls. Looping south, he marched around the city and occupied the positions used by the British army during the previous Egyptian campaign to the east, near Pompey's Gate. The most likely source of reinforcements for Alexandria was from the east, from the Albanian garrisons around Rosetta, and his positions now blocked that route. However, there was little he could do until, thankfully, on the 20 March the remaining troopships arrived, and the sight of these reinforcements induced the garrison to surrender.

Now Mackenzie-Fraser had his





**Muhammed Ali, the Albanian visionary who rose to dominate Egypt.**



**While Britain fought to help the Mamelukes in Egypt, others were fighting for Napoleon. Here they put down resistance in Madrid, May 1808.**

whole force together, safely behind Alexandria's walls, and could rest easy that his objectives, such as they were, had been achieved with less than 20 casualties. The arrival of what was left of Duckworth's force added to this security. But on the 23 March, Messitt again entered the equation. His pre-war politicking had led to promises to the Mamelukes that the British would support them militarily, and help them to oust Ali. Now he could see that Mackenzie-Fraser was content to sit in Alexandria, with no intention of involving himself in the Egyptian civil war. Some form of offensive action was needed. Even if he could be persuaded to attack the Albanian garrison at Rosetta, 40 miles east along a series of spits and isthmuses between Lakes Mahadieh and Edko and the sea, it would show willing. The Mamelukes had been pushed back to the Upper Nile region and any sign of support would be welcome. So Missett informed Mackenzie-Fraser that Alexandria was on the verge of famine, with just two weeks of grain left in the city. The prospect of starvation, plague and insurrection could only be avoided if the British were to seize and secure the city's main grain-supplying region—the area around Rosetta.

On 29 March, Mackenzie-Fraser despatched nearly one third of his force to seize Rosetta. General Meade's Brigade of the 31st Foot and the Chasseurs Britanniques had two six-pounders and two howitzers attached

—making a total of 1400-1500 men. The whole was then placed under the command of General Wauchope, adding an entirely superfluous layer to the chain of command. What they were marching towards neither Wauchope nor Meade knew. They had no intelligence of either the area or the enemy. They did not know how many Albanians, if any, to find at Rosetta (provisional estimates ran from 500-2000), how their dispositions stood, how good their morale and discipline were, or how likely they were to stand and fight or run away.

The march was pressed ahead at full speed, covering the 40 miles in two days. On the 31 March, the column arrived, exhausted, above Rosetta, and could see no sign of life in the town. The accounts of what happened next vary greatly, with contradictory accounts even from the same sources. Missett, for example, peddled two entirely different accounts around London after the campaign, most likely to muddy the water and keep any blame from falling on himself. By the various accounts, Wauchope either carried out no reconnaissance at all and simply marched his men into the town, or made a perfunctory search of the town himself before ordering his column to advance. The force is variously described as mostly outside the town, or fully inside, or inside and dispersed around coffee shops, or inside and dispersed largely drunk, when the Albanians attacked.

### **Massacre at Rosetta**

It is almost certain that the bulk if not the whole of the British column entered the town. That they were dispersed is also certain, but not necessarily due to drunkenness or the appeals of the coffee shops. Rosetta had narrow, confused streets.

During the previous Egyptian campaign, Sergeant Pearson had described Alexandria thus: 'The principal streets were so narrow that they would not admit of more than two soldiers walking abreast, and in some places wading knee deep in mud and filth.' He continued to describe frequent fabric partitions across the streets, and the piles of rubbish and filth that choked them. Clearly, if a significant town like Alexandria was so cramped, Rosetta would be no different. No body of troops would be able to advance far without becoming disjointed and dispersed, while visibility would be almost zero. There was also the factor that many houses, presumably as defence against the heat, had large basements, many being virtually half underground. These cellars made ideal hiding places.

Once the column had been sucked into the centre of Rosetta, the enemy sprung their trap. Pouring up from cellars and firing down from high windows and roofs, they caught the British troops like rats in a barrel. Although Missett would later claim that the enemy were beaten off before the order was given to retreat, it was





**View of Alexandria from Pompey's Pillar, where General Mackenzie-Fraser's army drew up on 18 March 1807.**

almost certainly given immediately. Spread thin and with no means of communication or co-ordination, the troops were in an entirely alien environment. They were taught to fight in the open, in tight ranks and under strict discipline, and not in these close, claustrophobic conditions where the enemy held every advantage.

Falling back pell-mell to the edge of the city, it was only once they were in the open that order could be restored. Ranks were formed, and volleys swept through the Albanians pouring from the town's alleyways and streets. Now in good order and steadied by the familiar drill, what remained of the column retired in good order.

Behind them, they left four officers and 181 men killed, and with them they carried another 300 wounded—over one third of the force had become casualties. Whether General Wauchope was to blame for poor reconnaissance or not, he paid the price. His head, along with those of the other dead, appeared on a stake along the main road.

### **Cry of vengeance**

In Alexandria, Mackenzie-Fraser was aghast. Missett was still preaching imminent famine, while now British military pride and prestige also needed salving. A second force was immediately dispatched—two brigades under Generals William Stewart and John Oswald, plus 11 field guns. In all, 2,500 men marched out on 3 April 1807. Two days later, they reached the far edge of Lake Edko, and reconnaissance parties were sent out. They reported enemy forces still in Rosetta, and also a garrison at El Hamet. This village was four miles south of Rosetta, at a point where the River Nile ran close to the edge of Lake Edko, forming a choke point on the main road south. El Hamet would need to be taken and held to secure the British right flank, and so the column turned south. On their approach, the Albanian garrison fled, and after leaving Major Vogelsang with 300 men from De Roll's Regiment, General Stewart turned back north to invest Rosetta.

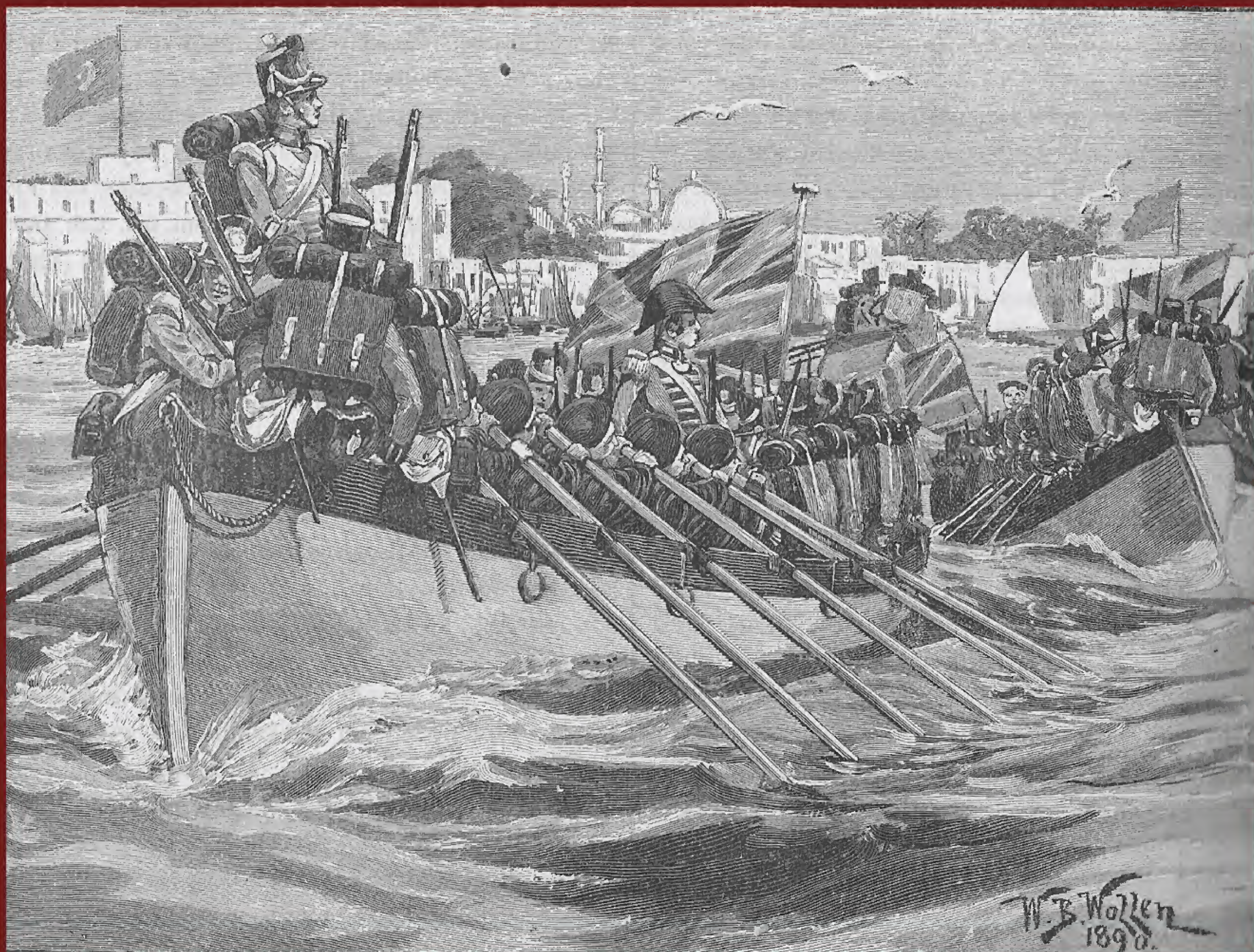
This was not to be so easy. Albanian troops of all arms had arrived to

reinforce the town, which lay against the Nile. Stewart did not have enough men to surround it, and so supplies and troops could still arrive by river. On arrival at Rosetta, 'The first thing we saw was the dead and mutilated bodies of hundreds of the former force. They were, of course, at once buried, and vengeance was the prevailing cry and feeling of the living.'

With the dead buried, breastworks were thrown up by Captain, later Field Marshal, John Burgoyne, and a bombardment of the town began. Mud walls, though, were not easy to breach. Ensign Joseph Anderson of the 78th Foot recalled: 'All our efforts failed to make any practicable breach in the walls, therefore no regular assault was attempted. Almost every evening the enemy sallied forth in large detachments of cavalry and infantry to attack our advance posts and piquets.

Counter-battery fire also created problems, and one particularly damaging enemy battery on the far left flank of their line was taken in a night assault by Major MacDonald of the 78th Foot, with 200 of his own men and





British troops pull out of Alexandria in September 1807, having achieved little.

40 sailors. Boats borrowed from the fleet were used to float them down the river to attack from behind. Seizing the guns, they turned them onto the town and fired several shots before spiking them and retreating.

Apart from such forays, very little action occurred for over two weeks. By now, Ali had arrived with reinforcements, and on the night of the 19 April, strong Albanian cavalry forces crossed the Nile, attacking El Hamet and probing the forces at Rosetta. Stewart decided that El Hamet was the weak point and needed immediate reinforcing before a stronger enemy force arrived. He despatched Captain Tarleton of the 35th Foot with the light companies of his own and De Roll's Regiment's.

Advancing over the plain towards El Hamet, they dispersed the enemy horsemen, but as dawn broke the Albanians consolidated. Feeling the pressure, Tarleton ordered a withdrawal, but his two companies

became separated. Albanian horsemen fell out of the murky dawn onto the company from De Roll's, cutting them down where they stood. Of the 78 men in the company, just five managed to reach safety.

On receiving this news, Stewart immediately despatched a stronger force to clear the plain and reinforce El Hamet. Colonel Macleod of the 78th was given two of his own companies, one company of the 35th, a field gun and a handful of dragoons to support Major Vogelsang and his men from De Rolls. Macleod dispersed his force across the village and to either side, blocking the two roads north to Rosetta. Their orders were, if pressed, to fall back to their right flank, which was hard against Lake Edko. From here, the entire force could move north with the lake protecting their flank and rear.

Even as he ordered Macleod south, Stewart was realising that his position was untenable. He did not have enough

men to take Rosetta, or enough to hold both El Hamet and the siege lines against serious attack. The next day, he decided, he would order the two wings of his army to fall back and concentrate on the village of Edko, and then return to Alexandria.

### **Galloping like savages**

That night, the Albanians floated 100 boats full of infantry across the Nile, joined by a large cavalry force. In the dawn, Stewart realised that all was lost and immediately sent his sick and wounded, and any salvageable supplies, to the rear with the remains of the 78th and De Rolls. He sent messengers south to tell Macleod to pull out, and ordered a final, frantic bombardment of Rosetta to cover his intentions. This complete, he ordered the heavy guns spiked and buried in the sand, and with the light guns, seven companies of the 35th and three detached light companies fell back.





Alexandria's Rosetta Gate, through which General Wauchope's ill-fated force marched out.



The battered British fleet engage the Ottoman fleet in the Sea of Marmara, 19 February 1807.

As the enemy closed in, Stewart formed his men into a square and began to crawl inch-by-inch back to Edko. 'We hard scarcely moved off when our square was surrounded by thousands of Turkish cavalry and infantry,' recalled Joseph Anderson, 'howling, screaming, and galloping like savages around us, at the same time firing at us from their long muskets, but fortunately with comparatively little loss to us. We occasionally halted our square, wheeled back a section, and gave them a few rounds of shot and shell from our artillery, then moved on in the same good order. This was a long and tiring day, and the only retreat in square I ever saw. It occupied us nearly 12 hours, from five in the morning till the same hour in the evening.'

It was a long and arduous day, but Stewart managed to save his command for the loss of just four men killed and 99 wounded. Macleod would not be so lucky.

When the Albanian cavalry came sweeping out of the dawn to attack El Hamet, Macleod and some of his subordinates seem to have panicked. Instead of folding in onto the right flank, his force began to fall back piecemeal, seemingly at Macleod's orders, most coming to rest on and around a sand hill directly to their rear. Macleod was killed, and Major Vogelsang took over, trying to surrender. However, Captain Colin Mackay of the Grenadier Company 78th, despite a sabre-wound to the neck and a bullet wound in the thigh, rallied the force, and inspired them to fight on, apparently to the last round. Eventually, the force was overwhelmed and surrendered. Of the 36 officers and

780 men who had held El Hamet, none had escaped. Nearly 300 were killed, and the rest carried away into captivity.

### Fortunes change

In Alexandria, Mackenzie-Fraser realised that all was lost—his army cut to shreds, with not enough soldiers to even man his own walls, and the population on the brink of starvation. Then his fortunes began to change. Firstly, seeing that the commanding general was on the brink of pulling out, Messitt revealed that while the city was indeed short of grain, there was plenty of rice to make up rations. Starvation had never been a series threat.

Secondly, a slightly perplexed Ali wrote to Mackenzie-Fraser asking what his intentions were (assuming that Mackenzie-Fraser knew himself). He had heard that the British had orders not to operate beyond the immediate area of Alexandria, and wondered if this were true. If so, he hoped an arrangement could be made. Thirdly, a month after the debacle outside El Hamet, a supply convoy arrived from Sicily with food and reinforcements, the 21st and 62nd Foot. Mackenzie-Fraser now had enough food and men to hold his walls, and the pressure on him eased.


Over the summer of 1807, although the Mamelukes continued to lobby Mackenzie-Fraser and Missett for action against Ali, a de facto truce fell across Alexandria. Questions regarding the prisoners were also addressed, and it was discovered that although some had been sold as slaves, the French consul in Cairo had been going to great lengths to see to the care and medical needs of the British held there.

Meanwhile, in Britain, reality was at last setting in. The government began to realise the futility of their actions, especially given the news that Russia had not only surrendered, but defected. At the Treaty of Tilsit on 7 July 1807, the Emperor of Russia had greeted the Emperor of France with the words: 'I hate the English as much as you do.' Not only was Russia at war with the Ottomans, but now the French declared war on the Turks as well, while the Russians declared war on Britain.

Given the new international situation, the British government ordered Mackenzie-Fraser to pull out. News finally reached Alexandria on 3 September, and Ali was informed. Eager to send the British on their way, he went to great lengths to track down all of the prisoners taken at El Hamet, even those sold into slavery in Upper Egypt, and returned them. On 19 September, the British expeditionary force in Egypt set sail for Sicily. In January, 1808, the Treaty of Dardanelles re-established peace between the British and Ottoman Empires. Trade rights were granted, and promises of military help exchanged.

So ended one of the most futile episodes of the British war against Napoleon, and in one of the bleakest years of the war. This year also saw the end of the expedition to Buenos Aires, and the misadventure to Copenhagen. At least the former had led to monetary gain, and the latter had served a strategic purpose in neutralising the Danish fleet. The Anglo-Turkish War cost Britain a ship of the line, and thousands of prime soldiers and sailors killed or wounded. But more than that, it had cost an incalculable amount of pride and prestige •





Wayne's dragoons advance to attack Indians at the battle of Fallen Timbers. Painting by H Charles McBarron. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)

# Mad General Wayne

One of America's first great soldiers, Anthony Wayne's military leadership was not based on wild-eyed enthusiasm, argues ARNOLD BLUMBERG, but a natural flair for leading troops.

**E**arly morning showers gave way to a clear and hot dawn on 20 August 1794. Anthony Wayne struggled out of bed suffering excruciating pain from chronic gout, which had afflicted him for years. His arms and legs tightly swathed in flannel bandages, to relieve the agony the disease visited upon him, made it almost impossible to move. It took three men to host his heavy body on to his horse. As he prepared to lead his men out of their encampment that day, he realized that he was approaching the culmination of

the most important military campaign of his career. Either his soldiers would clash with a coalition of Indians, or he would confront the British at nearby Fort Miami, and perhaps precipitate a war between the United States and England.

The day before, Major General Wayne of the Army of the United States of America had confidently wagered with his second in command, Brigade General James Wilkinson, that the enemy they were about to face would not fight, but instead elect to negotiate a peace. Wayne offered Wilkinson 10 guineas and a quarter-cask of wine if he

was proven wrong. Within 24 hours of this bet, Wayne was called upon to pay.

## Quick flashing temper

Anthony Wayne was born 1 January 1745 at the family estate of Waynesborough in Easttown Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania, 20 miles north of Philadelphia. Anthony Wayne's grandfather, known as Captain Anthony Wayne, was born in 1666 in Yorkshire, England. He had relocated to Ireland where he carried out a number of civil responsibilities for the government



in London. But his most outstanding contribution was as leader of a squadron of dragoons under William of Orange at the battle of the Boyne in 1690, which clinched William's claim to the British throne. The 'Old Captain' later took part in Marlborough's continental wars before he purchased, in 1724, the 380-acre farm in Easton, Pennsylvania, which became the Wayne family homestead in America.

One of Captain Wayne's sons, Isaac, joined him in America from Ireland, married Elizabeth Iddings, a neighbor from Chester County, and inherited the Captain's property in 1739. Isaac and Elizabeth had three children, two girls, and a son Anthony—the future American general. Like his father, Isaac experienced military life serving tours of active duty on the Pennsylvania frontiers as a militia officer during the Seven Years War. In later years, Anthony would express pride in his grandfather and father's martial achievements and acknowledge his own interest in soldiering was first stirred by their wartime exploits.

There is little in the Wayne family records that suggest young Anthony had anything but an uneventful, comfortable childhood. However, he did not want to follow his father's wish that he become a lawyer or farmer. In response, Isaac sent Anthony to the boy's Uncle Gabriel Wayne to be tutored in a course of study that would allow the youth to assume a proper vocation. Unfortunately, Anthony made little progress in his studies, showing more interest in playing soldiers with his fellow students than applying himself to learning. Greatly vexed, the elder Wayne pulled the boy back home and set him to hard manual labour on the family farm. Preferring labouring over text books than a field plow, the teenager got his father to return him to Uncle Gabriel and another chance at mastering his uncle's course of instruction.

Pleased with his son's renewed effort under his brother's tutelage, Isaac enrolled Anthony in the Philadelphia Academy (the progenitor of the University of Pennsylvania), in the city of that name, to continue the boy's education. Despite an attraction to horse racing, billiards, and imbibing excessive amounts of expensive wine, Anthony did well in all his courses, especially mathematics. In 1763, he graduated from the Philadelphia Academy and returned to Easttown to start a career as a surveyor.

But the new graduate delayed his departure for home a number of weeks. He had encountered many English army officers in the drinking inns that abounded in Philadelphia while he attended school

there, and was much affected by their tales of battlefield heroics and glory. Naturally drawn to the military life, he hoped to buy a commission in the Royal British Army. He reasoned that staying in Philadelphia would aid him in that endeavor, but Isaac Wayne demurred and refused to advance his son money to make such a purchase. The disappointed young man had no choice but to finally return to Waynesboro.

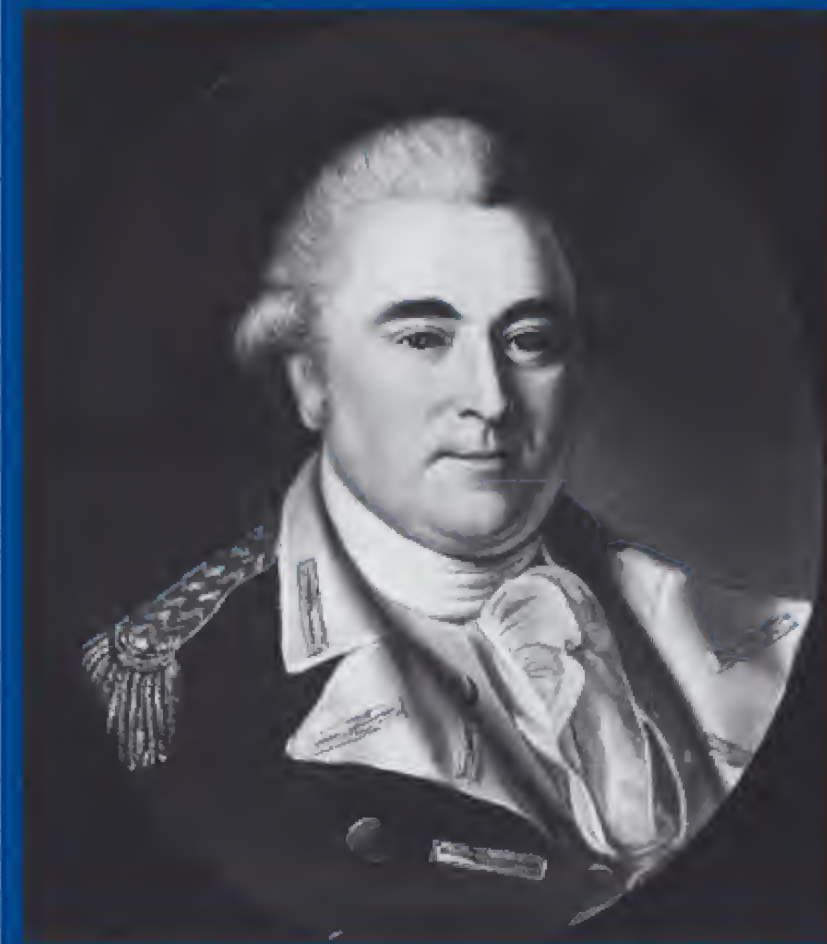
At this time, the 18-year-old was described by a contemporary as 'above middle stature, sturdy, muscular and stocky but yet well proportioned.' Sporting a ruddy complexion 'his hair was dark [faintly reddish]; his forehead was high and handsomely formed; he had a jutting chin; his eyes were dark hazel, intelligent, quick and penetrating; his nose was aquiline... his whole countenance fine and animated.' In his 'natural disposition', he was very amiable, while remaining 'ardent and sincere in his attachments.' At the same time, it was remarked that like his grandfather, he had a 'quick, flashing temper which exhibited itself when its owner was frustrated or excited.' Others noted that along with his admirable traits he could be 'vain, over confident, boastful and impatient.'

Anthony found there was no lack of work for a trained surveyor in Chester County, for the region was rapidly increasing in settlement and public improvements and the need for defined property boundaries was vital. He quickly acquired a reputation for competency, thoroughness, and dependability in his line of work, and soon came in contact with the most important men in the Commonwealth. In his leisure time, he pursued the study of engineering, especially as it pertained to war, and astronomy.

By 1765, the young up and coming surveyor had joined a consortium of land speculators, including Dr Benjamin Franklin, which sought to develop land in Nova Scotia, Canada. Wayne acted as the organization's surveyor, receiving generous land grants as payment for his work, but unfortunately the venture collapsed within two years. Returning to his family home late that same year, he fell in love with a neighbour, Mary Penrose, who he married on 25 March 1766. The couple had two children, Margaretta in 1770, and a son Isaac two years later. In 1774, Anthony's aging father gave him complete control over the family holdings of Waynesboro.

### Genesis of a soldier

As the political tensions between Great Britain and her American colonies heightened in the early 1770s, Wayne, the well-to-do farmer, businessman



Portrait of Anthony Wayne painted by Charles W Peale, c1784, when the general was in his 40s. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)

and strict adherent to the principals of republicanism, threw his lot in with those who favoured complete independence from the mother country. Given his love of things martial that marked his character during this period, Wayne distained the peaceful avenues followed by others in an attempt to have colonial grievances redressed, instead concentrating on preparing for war. To this end, he helped create a revolutionary militia in eastern Pennsylvania.

In 1774, the 29-year-old entered upon the stage of public life from which he did not retire until his death two decades later. As an elected member of the Commonwealth's Provincial Convention, and then later its newly created Legislative Assembly, he aided the drafting of Pennsylvania's retaliatory trade measures against England, as well as the formation of the Committees of Correspondence and other actions protesting Parliament's coercive policies toward the American colonists.

After the initial American-British confrontation on 19 April 1775 at Lexington and Concord, Wayne devoted almost all his time during the ensuing colonial rebellion against Great Britain in the capacity of a soldier. He read everything he could on the ways of the soldier and raised a regiment of volunteer infantry. In January 1776, he was made a colonel in the regular Continental Army, commanding the 4th Battalion of the Pennsylvania Line. Soon, to conform to his closely held Whiggish doctrine (which proclaimed civil-military affairs be kept distinctly apart), he resigned all his civilian posts.

Wayne quickly became known as a strict disciplinarian—some called him a martinet. Regardless, his command was





**General Washington confronts Charles Lee and his retreating force at the battle of Monmouth in 1778. Painting by H Charles McBarron. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)**

acknowledged for its precision on the drill field and smart appearance by the time it moved to New York in April to join General George Washington's Continental Army.

In May, Wayne and his unit were transferred to Fort Ticonderoga at the southern tip of Lake Champlain. From here, they traveled by boat down the river to Sorel, in Canada, located on the south bank of the St Lawrence River. From there, General John Sullivan, commanding the American forces which had invaded British Canada, including Wayne's men, hoped to advance and capture the province's capital of Quebec.

Moving toward Trois-Rivieres, 50 miles south west of Quebec, the 1450 American troops first encountered the enemy on 9 June. After emerging from a swamp, Wayne's men engaged British regulars, and as a result of adroit maneuvering by Wayne of his battalion, the redcoats were forced to beat a hasty retreat. During this small encounter, it was noted that Wayne was affected by the excitement of combat, his 'very person seemed to expand, his high forehead to gleam as he swung his hat, his dark eyes to flash, his voice to ring in bugle

tones, and his mind to work like a clock, despite the danger.'

During the fight, Colonel Wayne was slightly wounded in the right leg. In his first battle, he had exhibited a coolness and intelligence under fire that bodied well for his future military career. But regardless of Wayne's success, the entire American force was compelled to flee the area around Trois-Rivieres as flanking English columns sought to entrap it. With a loss of 50 killed and 236 taken prisoners, in exchange for only 17 British killed and wounded, the Colonials crossed to the south of the St Lawrence at Sorel and found safety. Wayne was conspicuous in leading a large portion of the American army out of the net the enemy had hoped to ensnare it in. In a long detailed account of the actions around Trois-Rivieres to his friend Benjamin Franklin, Wayne characteristically took much of the credit for 'saving the American army in Canada'.

During July 1776, the American forces in Canada withdrew to Fort Ticonderoga where it remained for the winter. Wayne was appointed post commandant in November. Throughout this time, Wayne

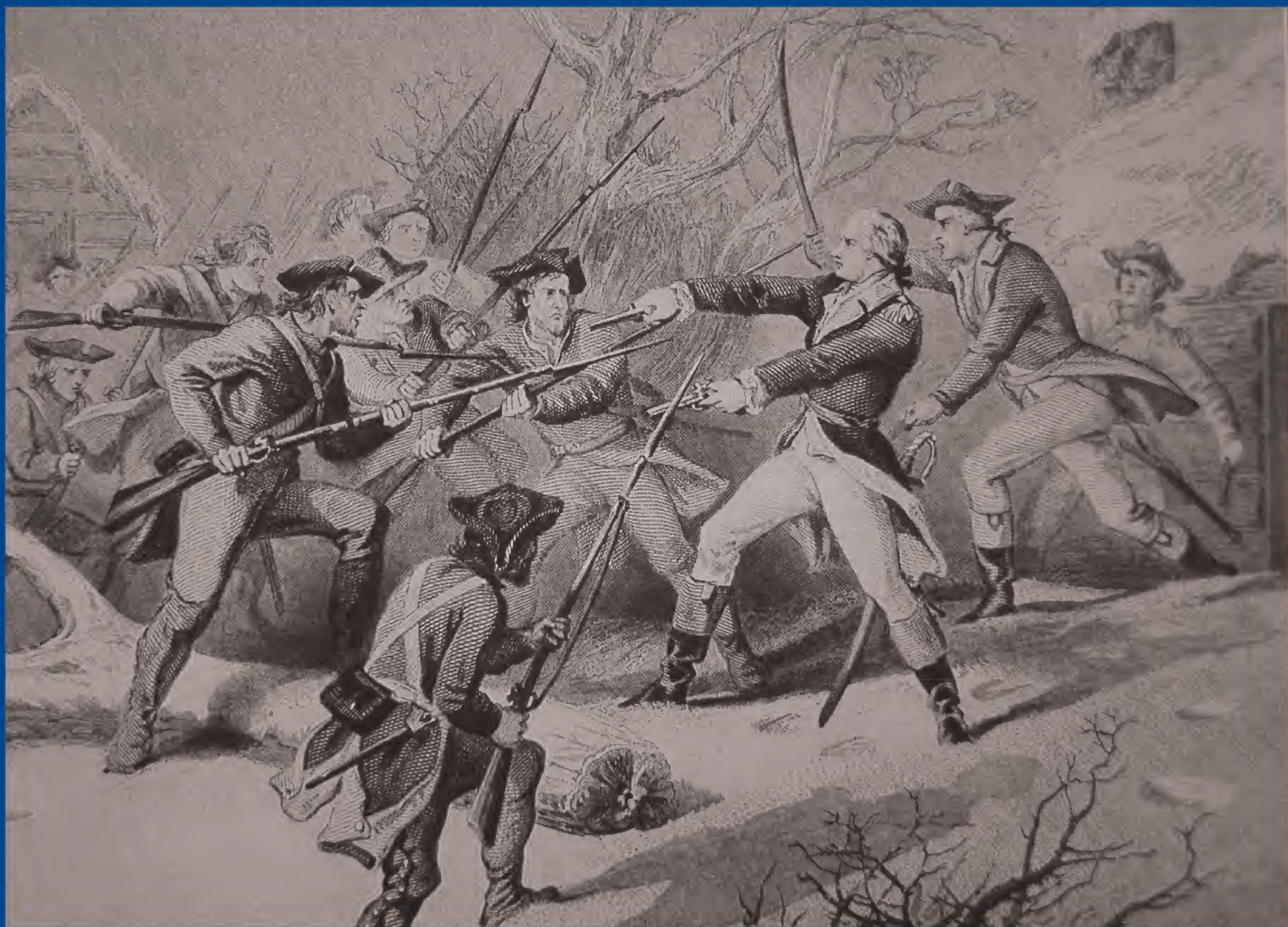
fought to keep the 1200 men stationed there fed, clothed, armed, and to maintain discipline, thankless if not vital tasks which made his stay at the fort one he grew to despise. To his great relief, he was able to depart for the main army under Washington then located in Morristown, New Jersey. He arrived there in May 1777 as a newly minted brigadier general, dating from February that year.

### **Soldier of the Revolution**

Shortly after arriving at Morristown, Wayne was given charge of a brigade of Pennsylvania infantry, then a division of 1700 troops containing two Pennsylvania brigades. His bravery under fire, skill at leading men in battle, and his abilities administering an army, all proven in Canada and at Ticonderoga, determined in Washington's eyes that Wayne was up to the responsibility of such a major command in the Continental Army.

The army moved out toward New Brunswick, New Jersey on 31 May, but not before Wayne had a successful skirmish with British forces under General James Grant on 25 May, which he noted





**General Wayne suppresses a mutiny of his Pennsylvania troops at Morristown on New Year's Day in 1781. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)**

earned for him Washington's 'Esteem and Confidence'. That esteem and confidence only increased on 22 June, when under Nathaniel Green, Wayne, along with Daniel Morgan's Rifle Corps, harassed the retreating British under Lord William Howe as they exited New Brunswick and left the state of New Jersey for New York City.

After fruitless marches and counter marches by the Americans, designed to divine Howe's intentions, Washington sent his army back to the Delaware River. In the second half of August, after realizing that his opponent meant to capture Philadelphia (the new American nation's capital), by a sea movement via the Chesapeake Bay, Washington took his 11,000-man force 20 miles north of the enemy objective. There he took a defensive position on the east bank of Brandywine Creek on 9 September. On the left, he placed Wayne's division, supported by artillery, to guard Chadd's Ford. In the American centre stood Greene's corps, with Sullivan's command holding the right. In reserve, he put the divisions of Adam Stephen and Lord Sterling behind Greene.

The battle of Brandywine commenced

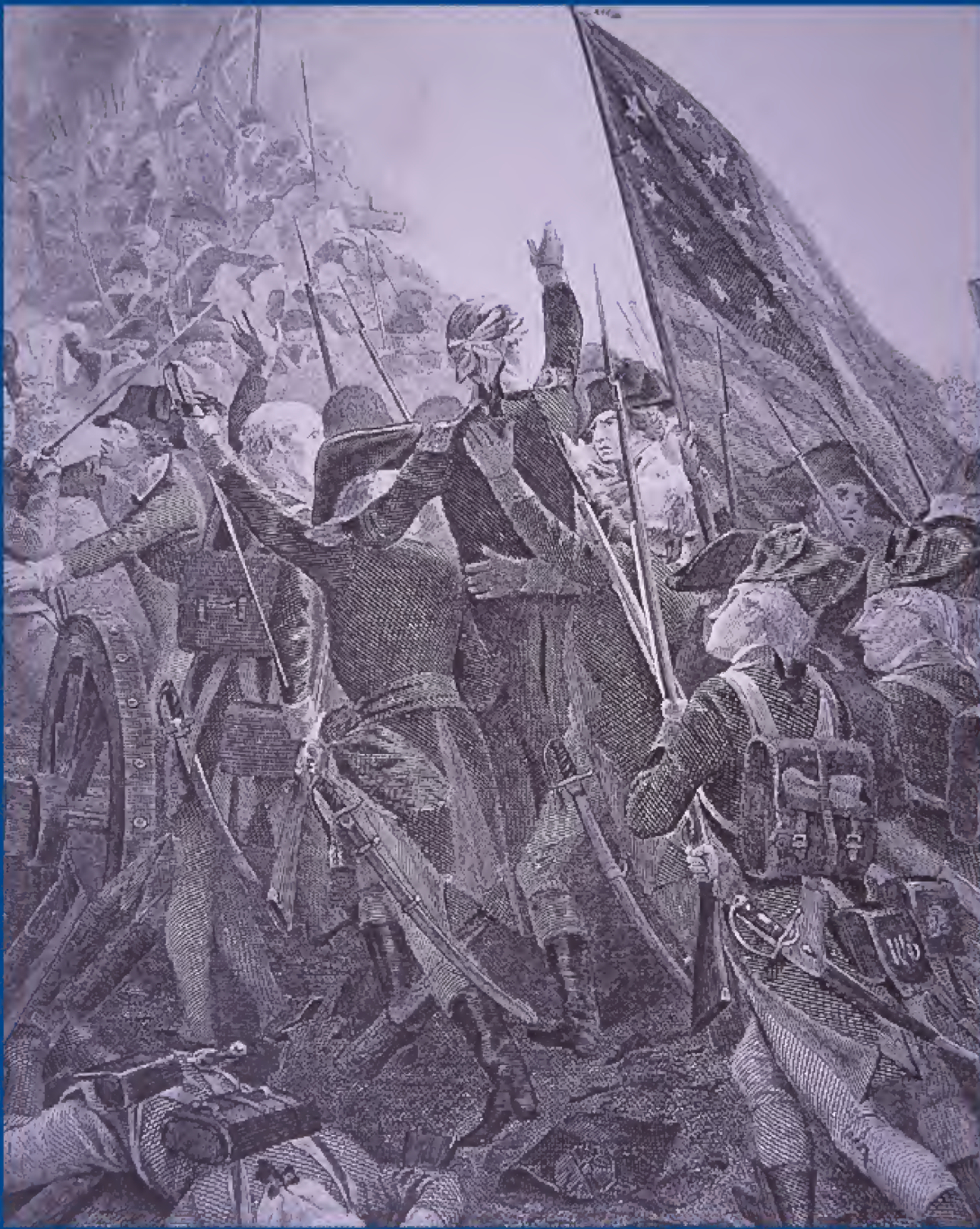
about 8.00am on 11 September 1777. As the American covering force under General William Maxwell was pushed back across the creek, Wayne and the rest of the American left and center traded cannon shots with an enemy that was merely tying them down there while he outflanked the American right, further to the north. The stalemate lasted for another four hours on this front. With pressure mounting to the north, Washington sent Greene's formation to his right, leaving Wayne and the light American covering forces to hold the rest of the colonial line on the Brandywine. Soon, Anglo-Hessian forces under Major General Wilhelm von Knyphausen pressed the weakened American left and center. After three hours of sustaining heavy enemy fire, Wayne was ordered to retreat. He disengaged in an orderly manner and followed the rest of the army across the Schuylkill River to Germantown, Pennsylvania. Brandywine had cost the Rebels 1300 men killed, wounded and prisoners as well as 11 cannons captured. The English suffered less than 600 casualties.

As Howe's army moved closer to

Philadelphia, Wayne was detached by his army leader to harass and slow down the enemy movement on the city in order to allow Washington's men a rest. Delighted with this assignment, on 18 September, Wayne moved his 1500-man command around and behind the British in the vicinity of Paoli and White Horse Tavern, only four miles from the enemy's right flank. Outnumbered by his foe by 10-1, Wayne nevertheless planned to storm the enemy cantonments in a daring morning assault on the 19th. He had to abandon his plan when he realized that Howe's forces were strong in the area of his proposed attack and on the alert.

Loitering in the region, only a mile from the British, Wayne determined to strike his prey early on the 21st with a surprise attack. But on the morning of the proposed American assault, it was the Rebels who shortly after midnight were surprised and routed by three Royal regiments, under Major General Sir Charles Grey, who pounced on his enemy using only the bayonet. Wayne had ordered his men to withdraw from their positions just before the British hit





**General Wayne leads the American bayonet attack at the battle of Stony Point in 1779. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)**



**American militiamen raised to fight the British between 1776 and 1779. Painting by HA Ogden. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)**

them, and this caused confusion in the American ranks as they tried to make an orderly retreat. Most of the Americans got away, but not before losing between 150 and 300 killed and captured to the British 28 killed and wounded. Wayne was conspicuous in his efforts to rally his demoralized troops, but to little avail. On 23 September, Wayne was ordered to rejoin the main army, the same day Howe and his redcoats entered Philadelphia.

### **Out of the mist**

In the weeks after the Paoli fight—referred to by many Americans as the Paoli Massacre—Wayne came under intense criticism for allowing the event to occur and not retreating before hand. Stunned by the adverse remarks and accusations about his leadership at Paoli, Wayne demanded a formal inquiry.

In early October 1777, Howe's army was at Germantown, Pennsylvania about 10 miles north of Philadelphia. Washington determined to strike his opponent there on the 4th. Wayne and Sullivan's divisions would form the American right; the Patriot left was composed of Greene and Stephen's men; Lord Sterling would control the reserve and follow Greene's column in the attack. After bumping into the British advanced positions in a thick fog,

Sullivan deployed his command in line of battle and charged. The Americans had to travel over an area dotted with fences and other obstructions, which greatly retarded their progress.

Out of the mist, the Rebels smashed in to the waiting English lines, pushing them back a mile and a half after a series of charges and counter charges. Wayne and Sullivan's attack ran out of steam but both were eager to continue when panic engulfed their forces. The men believed they were being attacked by British coming out of the murky gloom on their left flank. As a result, they bolted for the rear. In reality, the supposed flanking enemy was really friendly troops. Wayne and Sullivan's fighters could not be rallied despite Wayne's best efforts to do so.

Washington ordered a retreat to Pawling's Mill, 20 miles to the north of Germantown. The retreat was secured by Wayne and some of his reorganized command. At the battle, the Continental Army lost 152 killed, 521 wounded and 400 made prisoner. Howe's force endured 537 killed in action and wounded, as well as 14 taken captive. One of the Americans wounded was Wayne who received a bruise to his left foot from an enemy cannon ball. He also had his horse killed beneath him.

As the army rested after its humiliation

at Germantown, Wayne finally got his court martial in connection with the events at Paoli the month before. The military court convened on 24 October. Coming to a decision on 1 November, it unanimously concluded that General Wayne was not guilty of any dereliction of duty at Paoli and he had in fact done there 'everything that could be expected from an active, brave and vigilant officer.' The court acquitted Wayne of all charges, and after Washington immediately approved the sentence, the matter was officially ended.

Despite Washington's favorable opinion and support before, during and after his court martial, Wayne had become mildly disillusioned with the army commander's performance in 1777. He wrote as much to friends and relatives, but it never went beyond the cautious criticism of Washington that many felt at this juncture during the War of the American Revolution.

Wayne was with the army during its hellish frozen encampment at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777-78. His time was consumed trying to fill the ranks of his regiments and the bellies of his starving men. In both regards, he was moderately successful, leading at least one large scale foraging party in to enemy lines and securing cattle for the army.



With the arrival of spring, Wayne and the rest of the Continental Army were eager to come to grips with the British now led by General Sir Henry Clinton. Their opportunity came when the British evacuated Philadelphia on 18 June 1778. Under Major General Charles Lee, a former English lieutenant colonel in King George's army, advanced elements of American Continentals attacked the redcoats about one-half mile from Monmouth Court House, New Jersey on the 28th. Leading the Patriot's way was Wayne's division, which pushed the disorganized enemy rearguard until the British commander on the scene, General Charles Lord Cornwallis, now reinforced, orchestrated a counter attack that drove the Americans back. Wayne sent word to Lee that if he sent reinforcements, the battle might yet be won. Lee sent none and the Continentals continued to fall back.

When Washington arrived on the scene, Wayne was ordered to form a defensive line and check the enemy advance while the commander-in-chief reordered the remainder of the army 1000 yards behind Wayne's position. Wayne's hodgepodge line was thrown back by elite British light troops and grenadiers, and the former barely managed to reach Washington's newly established defensive site. But upon joining the main line, Wayne's men were able to force the enemy to retreat due to their extremely accurate musket and cannon fire. The resulting American pursuit was both short and half-hearted due to the heat of the day and the exhaustion of all the battle participants. Washington's army lost 325 soldiers to the British 385. After the fight, Washington heaped great praise on Wayne's performance in the battle.

### Storming force

After Monmouth, the American Army camped at White Plains, New York, keeping a close eye on Clinton's army safely ensconced in New York City. Wayne urged his chief to attack the place. Washington wisely declined, realizing, unlike his impetuous subordinate, that the city's defenses were too strong.

As the campaigning season of 1778 wound down, Wayne kept himself busy lobbying the Pennsylvania government for more men and money to support the war effort. He also urged his home state to advocate on his behalf that he be given an independent military command, as well as a promotion to major general in the Continental Army. He received neither.

In the summer of 1779, Wayne was ordered to capture the British post at Stony Point on the Hudson River just below Peekskill, New York. To accomplish this

task, the Pennsylvanian was given a corps of experienced light troops, two brigades strong. The mission was an important one since this area served as a major line of communication between New England and the middle colonies. Stony Point was a height which rose 150 feet from the water, jutted half a mile into the river, was surrounded on three sides by water, and the fourth side by a swamp, and contained three cannon held redoubts all surrounded by an abatis. The garrison was 500 men strong under the leadership of the capable Lieutenant Colonel Henry Johnson.

Around midnight on 15 July, Wayne's men set out in two columns to assault Stony Point. The storming force was forbidden to load their weapons—the attack would be at the point of the bayonet. As troops from the causeway opened covering fire, the northern and southern attack force rushed the position. Wayne, leading the southern group was hit in the head by an enemy musketball, which left him temporarily dazed but unhurt. Minutes after the attack began, the British post was in American hands. Wayne's stunning victory cost him 15 killed and 85 wounded. Johnson's English detachment suffered 63 dead, 70 wounded and 442 captured, along with 15 artillery pieces and tons of other war material. On 19 July, the Rebels evacuated Stony Point and the British soon re-occupied it. They left the area for good in October 1779.

In January 1780, Wayne returned home on leave. It was not a pleasant homecoming since he and his wife had been estranged for a number of years due to lack of attention to her on his part, and his 'fondness for ladies' [other than his wife] society', as he himself once put it on one occasion.

In mid-May, Wayne returned to Washington's army then situated in the Short Hills of New Jersey. He had hoped to resurrect a light body of troops and take command of them, but Washington vetoed that idea and placed him in charge of the 1st Pennsylvania Infantry Brigade in the division of Major General Arthur St Clair. He also advocated making a direct attack on New York City, but again Washington demurred.

The rest of 1780 was frustrating for Wayne, and the rest of the Continental Army. Although there were a number of raids, he was involved in no general actions. His responsibilities did increase with St Clair's elevation to army right wing commander. As a result, Wayne took charge of St Clair's old division in September.

In January 1781, Wayne had to deal with a mutiny by his Pennsylvania veterans over lack of pay and a wish that they be

discharged from the service. He handled this serious affair with care and moderation, mediating between the disheartened soldiery and the Pennsylvania Assembly until most of the men's complaints were satisfactorily addressed.

In late May, Wayne was ordered south to join forces with the Continental commander in Virginia—the Marquis de Lafayette. The plan was to clear out all British forces in the Old Dominion and then proceed to the Carolinas to help Nathaniel Greene deal with the enemy there.

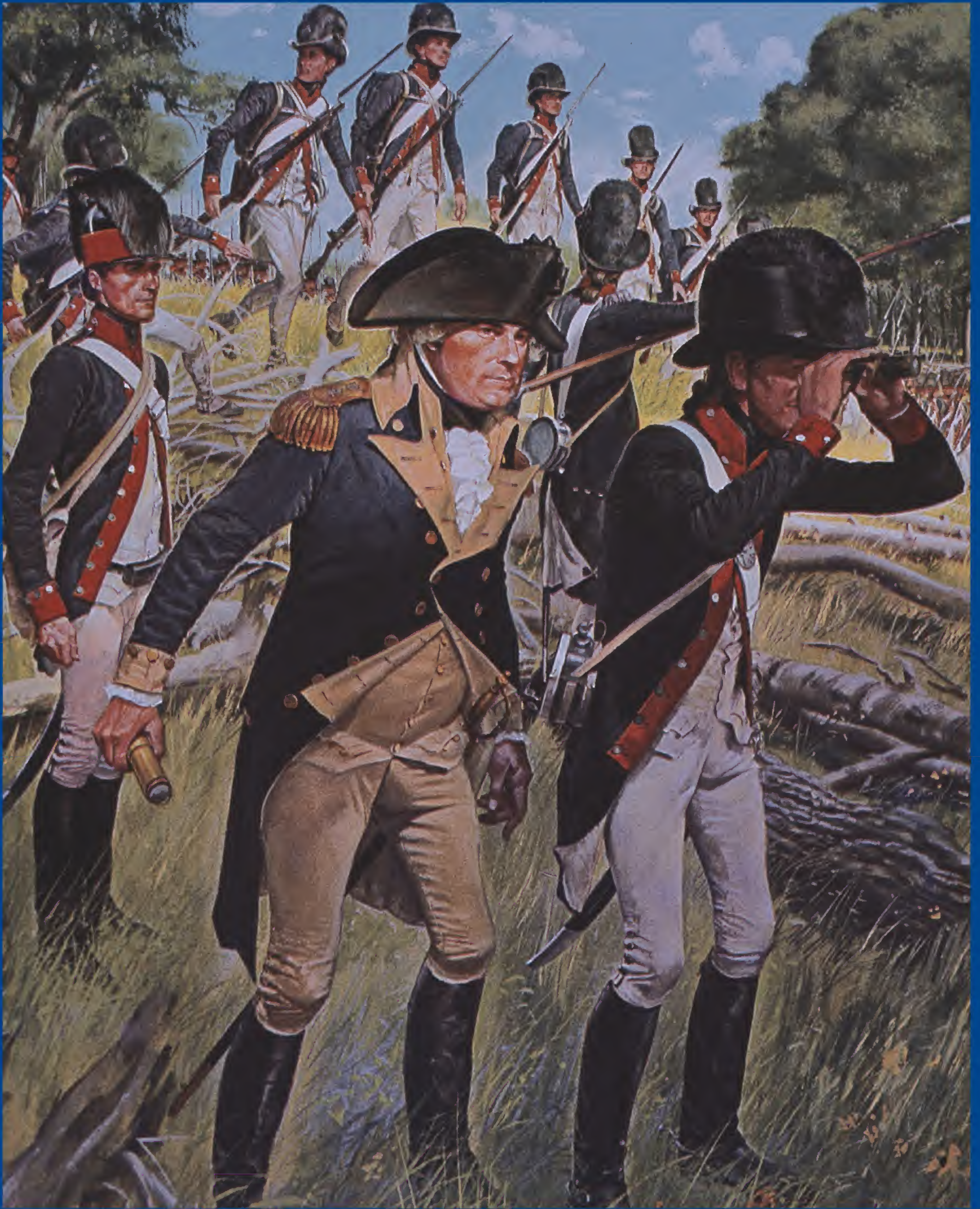
### Crazy attack

Wayne joined the Marquis in early June, and followed the British under Lord Cornwallis. On 6 July, Wayne attacked the British rearguard at Green Spring Farm about 16 miles from Williamsburg, Virginia. After passing a narrow causeway bordered by swamp



British redcoat soldier of 1775 during the American War of Independence. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)





**General Wayne directs the US forces at the battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. Painting by H Charles McBarron. (Peter Newark's Military Pictures)**



land, the Americans ran in to the rest of Cornwallis' army drawn up to receive them. The British had set a trap for the Rebel vanguard and it had fallen in to it. Hard pressed, Wayne, who had just received a few reinforcements, formed his 800 men and made a desperate bayonet charge against the enemy who outnumbered him five-to-one.

Lafayette, viewing the American's attack, thought Wayne was either rash or crazy and ordered him to immediately retreat. The Yankee attack slowed the enemy advance and prevented the Americans from being cut off from their retreat route, but they were driven back with the enemy pursuit only ending with nightfall. To many in the army hierarchy, the battle of Green Spring Farm, like Paoli, brought in to question Wayne's ability to foresee trouble on the horizon and act reasonably, accordingly.

In the coming weeks, Wayne was ordered to establish a blocking position south of the James River in order to prevent the escape of Cornwallis' army from Virginia to North Carolina. This Wayne effectively did. For his trouble he was wounded in the leg by an American picket as he neared Lafayette's campsite at the end of this operation.

During the American siege of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Wayne was only marginally involved, supervising his men in the digging of the final trench surrounding the town. On 8 November 1781, after numerous pleas to Washington to allow him to see further action, Wayne and his Pennsylvania Line marched from Yorktown south to join forces with Nathaniel Greene.

In January 1782, Greene ordered the newly arrived Wayne to take command of the American military forces in Georgia. Between March and May, Wayne gathered as many men as he could to retake the city of Savannah, all the while fending off raids and attacks from British regulars and their Indian allies, which protected the Georgia town. On 11 July, the British voluntarily left Savannah, allowing Wayne to occupy it the same day. Early August saw Wayne leave Georgia to join Greene at Charlestown, South Carolina, which was still occupied by the British Army. The jewel of the South did not revert to American control until 14 December 1782 when the English departed it without interference from the Americans.

Affected by malaria, Wayne, after one more foray in to Georgia to deal with the Creek Indians there, traveled to Charlestown, then by boat to Pennsylvania, at the end of July 1783. During 1784, Wayne remained with the rapidly shrinking American Army and was promoted major general in October. In 1783, he ran

for political office in his native state as a member of the Council of Censors, a group dedicated to preserving the state constitution or suggesting revisions to it. He won membership to the Council as part of the newly formed Republican Party. At the same time, he was beset by massive financial debt as a result of money owed to him for his wartime service, the cost of his political campaign, and the large numbers of slaves he had purchased to work on a rice plantation in Georgia he had acquired.

### **Battle of Fallen Timbers**

In 1791, now out of the Army and in part to relieve the burden of debt that hung around his neck, Wayne ran for a seat in the United States House of Representatives. He won and used his position to advance the expansion of the United States military.

In March 1792, President George Washington named Wayne as the new commander of the American army in the Northwest Territory with the rank of major general. Wayne, now suffering from gout (caused by the body producing an excess of uric acid), took up his new duty in June. Making his headquarters at Legionville on the Ohio River (22 miles from modern day Pittsburg, Pennsylvania), he set to work on building and training his army. Known as the Legion of the United States, this force of 2,600 regulars was tasked with taming an area filled with Indians and British outposts.

In May 1793, the Legion and its commander moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. With the failure of peace negotiations between the Indians and the United States Government in August, Wayne intensified the training of his troops and began to stockpile supplies for future military operations. In October, he and the Legion started their move north of the Ohio River. In November, he put his command in to winter quarters at Fort Greeneville, between the Miami and Wabash Rivers.

During the early part of the next year, Wayne built a number of army posts north of Fort Greeneville in order to pressure the Indians to come to the peace table. But the Indian leaders—Buckongahelas, a Delaware chieftain, Blue Jacket, a Shawnee war leader, and Little Turtle, chief of the Miami tribe—were intent on war. They had destroyed an American army under Arthur St Clair in 1791, why could they not defeat the force Wayne was bringing against them? As the year progressed, and news reached him that the British were aiding the Indians with arms and supplies, Wayne decided he had to act.

In late July, the Legion marched north

toward the Indian concentration at Fallen Timbers, not far from the western tip of Lake Erie. It was near there that he made his wager with General Wilkinson before setting off to confront his Indian foes.

Five miles from camp, the Legion stumbled on to the Indians who had taken a position on ground unsuitable for Wayne's cavalry to operate in. The 1000 warriors planned to attack the American left. Seeing this, Wayne ordered an infantry advance directly at the center of the enemy line, with cavalry thrusts against both of his opponent's flanks simultaneously delivered. The order to attack rang out and the American infantry charged with the bayonet until they just reached the Indian line of covered logs and trees. There they stopped to give the Native Americans a volley of musket fire. The soldiers then rushed to the attack. Under the relenting army charge, the Indians were routed, being driven over two miles over the next hour. At a cost of 33 dead and 100 wounded, the Army had put their enemies to flight.

For the next six days the soldiers burned the Indian crops and destroyed their villages. This, combined with the battle of Fallen Timbers fought a week before, brought the Indians to the negotiating table, and peace to the North West territory was finally achieved.

Physically ill, and upset over the political machinations going on in Philadelphia, Wayne asked for and was granted leave at the end of 1795. He traveled from the North West territory to his home in January 1796. In June, he returned to his wilderness command. In August, he moved his territorial headquarters to Detroit. While traveling from that location to Pittsburg, the general became ill from his long time affliction of gout. He died on 15 December and was buried in a plain oak coffin at Presque Isle, modern day Erie.

Thirteen years after his death, his two children wanted to bring their father's remains back east for burial in the family plot. When the casket was opened at Presque Isle, all were surprised to see that the body was well preserved. Since the general's remains could not be transported in that state, the corpse was dissected and the parts were boiled in a large kettle to remove the flesh from the bones. The skeleton was cleaned and the bones shipped the 850 miles to Easton. On 4 October 1809, the general was buried at St David's Church near Waynesborough. To this day, 'Mad Anthony' Wayne rests in a quietude that he rarely enjoyed during his active life •



# Head-Hunting Roman Cavalry

Head-hunting and scalping were just some of the pursuits of Roman cavalrymen, explains ROSS COWAN, hell-bent on acts of bravery and bravado.



Reconstruction of the Imperial Roman cavalryman Insus by Graham Sumner. Insus' splendid tombstone was discovered in Lancaster in 2005. It depicts him as a triumphant rider, brandishing the severed head of a British warrior. ('Roman Military Dress' by Graham Sumner, The History Press, 2009).



**T**he legionary is the archetypal Roman soldier, but this seemingly invincible infantryman was a plebeian from the lower strata of society. For most of the Roman era, the rich and aristocratic members of the cavalry class were the princes of the battlefield, leading decisive charges and fighting famous single combats against enemy champions.

### Human sacrifice

In 437 BC, Rome and the Etruscan city of Veii were at war. Veii was located only ten miles north of Rome and their territories were separated by the River Tiber. The bone of contention between the cities was Fidenae, an important bridgehead on the Latin bank of the Tiber and only a few miles upstream from Rome. The town had fallen to Rome in 498 BC but had recently revolted with the support of Lars Tolumnius, king of Veii. The Romans sent four ambassadors to the town but they were killed on the orders of Tolumnius. He then advanced his forces into Roman territory and fought a hard but inclusive battle against the legions near the river Anio. A second battle was fought before the walls of Fidenae, the Etruscans and Fidenates reinforced by allies from Falerii. This time, the Romans forced back the enemy infantry with relative ease, but Tolumnius was winning the cavalry battle.

The Roman historian Livy, drawing on the traditions of the aristocratic Corneli

clan, relates that Cornelius Cossus, a military tribune, watched how Tolumnius scattered the Roman cavalry formations with every charge he led. Cossus intended to offer Tolumnius in sacrifice to the spirits of the murdered Roman envoys and waited for his opportunity.

Cossus spurred his horse forward, as Tolumnius came close by at the head of his troop. He unsaddled Tolumnius with his lance, then leapt from his horse and battered the king with the boss of his shield as he struggled to rise. Cossus speared the king through the torso and pinned him to the ground. He then tore out the lance and stabbed the king repeatedly until he was dead. Cossus quickly stripped the king of his armour, hacked off his head and fixed it to the point of his lance and remounted his horse. The Etruscan cavalry panicked at the sight of this bloody warrior charging towards them with the severed head of their king. They fled back to Fidenae and left the Romans in possession of the battlefield. Fidenae was put under siege but did not fall until 435 BC.

Mamercus Aemilius, the Roman commander at Fidenae, was awarded a triumph for the victory, but during the procession through Rome all eyes fell on Cossus and the spoils he carried. Much to the chagrin of Mamercus, the soldiers sang verses comparing Cossus to Romulus, the founder of Rome and the first taker of the 'spolia opima'. The spolia opima, or 'greatest spoils', were the arms and

armour stripped from an enemy king or general killed in single combat. When the procession was over, Cossus went to the temple of Jupiter Feretrius and dedicated the spoils to the god, setting them beside those believed to have been taken by Romulus from the Latin king Acron. The spoils may well have included Tolumnius' head, for legend had it that Romulus beheaded Acron. Cossus inscribed a brief account of his deed on the king's mangled linen cuirass. It was rediscovered when the temple was restored in 32 BC.

### Head Hunters

Claudius Marcellus was the next Roman to win the spolia opima. In 222 BC, he slew Viridomarus, king of the Gaesati, at the battle of Clastidium. According to one account of the battle, the Gaesati were superior in cavalry and Marcellus had to extend line to prevent his army being enveloped. He was contemplating how best to retreat when proud Viridomarus rode up and challenged the Roman to single combat. Marcellus was a noted duellist. He immediately accepted the challenge and spurred his horse forward. Plutarch, the biographer of Marcellus, relates 'he charged at the king, and by a thrust of his lance which pierced his adversary's cuirass, and by the impact of his horse at the gallop, threw him, still living, upon the ground, where, with a second and a third blow, he promptly killed him.'

Another account of the duel adds



An aristocratic south Italian cavalryman of the age of Manlius Torquatus. He is protected by an expensive winged Phrygian helmet and muscle cuirass, but early Roman cavalry sometimes fought without armour because it was considered more heroic. (Bibi Saint-Pol)



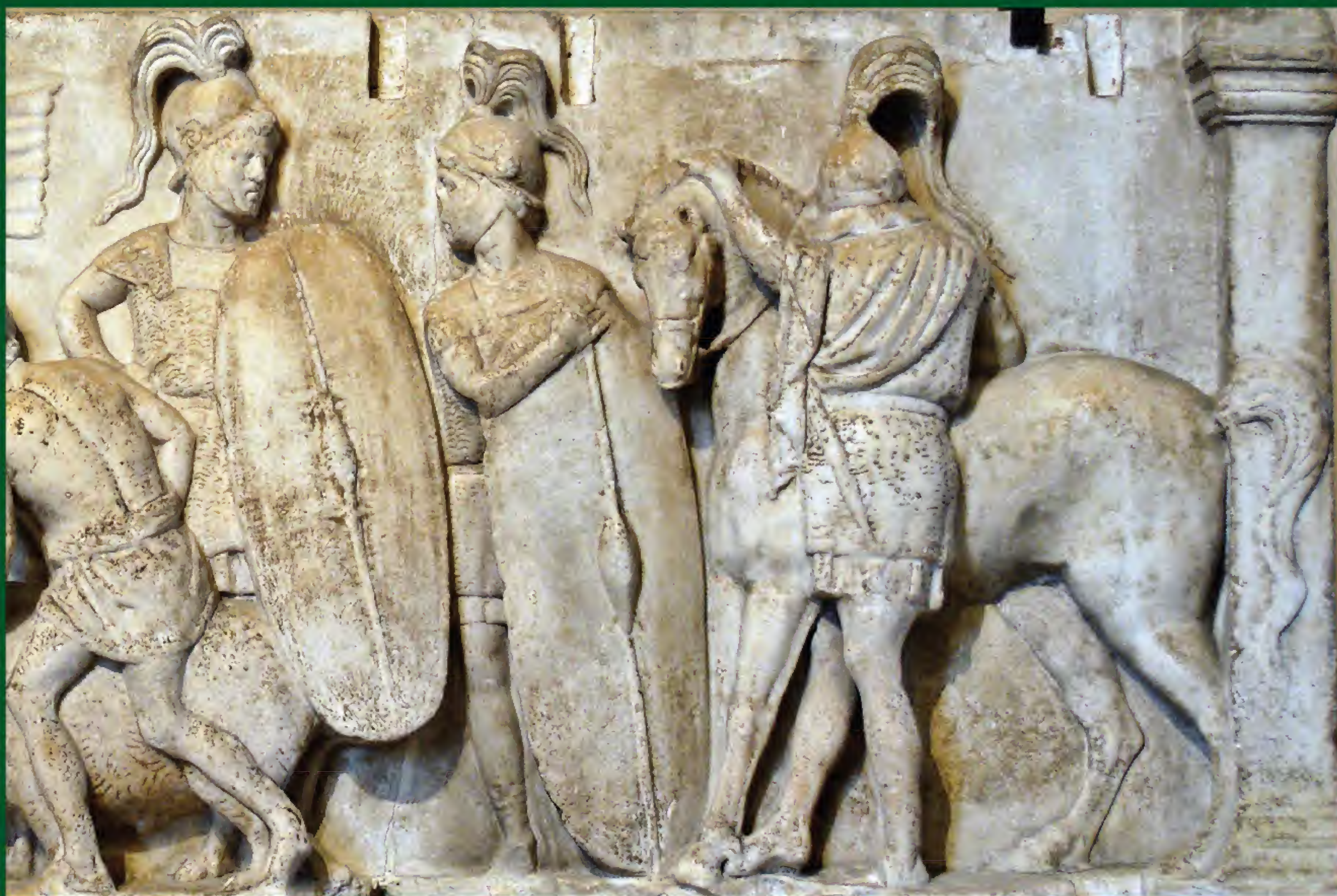
The noble cavalry class of Capua, Roman citizens since 338 BC, was instrumental in the great victory over the Samnites and Gauls at Sentinum in 295 BC. This vase shows a Capuan horseman returning from battle with his spoils – a shield and bronze belt (typical of Italic warriors) – hanging from his spear. (Peter Roan)





**Modern reconstruction of an unusual Roman cavalry helmet from Kops Plateau in the Netherlands, which was covered in horse hair to simulate a human scalp. The helmet of the general Flaminius was adorned with the scalp of a Gallic chief. (Wolfgang Sauber)**





The so-called altar of Domitius Ahenobarbus depicts a census scene, c 100 BC. The citizens were registered according to wealth and assigned to the legions or cavalry. Two legionaries converse and a wealthier cavalryman is about to mount his horse. (Marie-Lan Nguyen)

an interesting detail: Marcellus cut off Viridomarus' head. As suggested above, the head may have formed part of the greatest spoils, along with the defeated king's arms and armour. Heads and scalps were prized as trophies by aristocratic Roman horsemen. For example, when Flaminius rode to disaster at the battle of Lake Trasimene in 217 BC, he did so wearing a helmet decorated with the long-haired scalp of Gargenus, the king of the Boii, whom he had slain seven years earlier. Sergius Silus, another of Marcellus' contemporaries and best known for fighting with a prosthetic right hand made of iron, is depicted on coins issued by his grandson as a triumphant rider, brandishing the severed head of a long-haired Gaul with his left hand.

Recent research on Talmudic texts has revealed that Roman soldiers of the 2nd century AD wore the scalps of slaughtered Jews on their helmets. This recalls the gruesome decoration of Flaminius' helmet, and suggests why some Imperial cavalrymen wore odd-looking helmets covered in horse hair; it was presumably to simulate human hair.

Head-hunting also continued into the Imperial period. In 2005, a spectacular

Roman military tombstone was discovered in Lancaster. Dating to c AD 100, it is decorated with a portrait of the cavalryman Insus. His stallion tramples a headless Briton; Insus brandishes the severed head. It has been suggested that Insus, a cavalryman of Gallic descent, followed the Gallic tradition of head-hunting, but the near-contemporary Great Trajanic Frieze in Rome shows praetorian cavalrymen displaying trophy heads. Praetorians were predominantly Italian and this suggests the old Roman practice of head-taking remained strong, and it is likely that Insus was influenced as much by the traditions of the Roman army, as by the practices of his ancestors.

### Deadly duellists

Roman riders could be impetuous and undisciplined. The Roman state and its generals attempted to rein in their wild behaviour by threatening to execute those who broke formation to pursue enemies, or indulged in unsanctioned single combats.

In 340 BC, Manlius Torquatus the Younger, son of that year's consul, led a cavalry patrol in Campania. His troop encountered a squadron of rebel Roman citizens from the Latin city of Tusculum.

The leader of the Tusculans, a renowned warrior called Geminus Maecius, rode forward and insulted Torquatus and then made the inevitable challenge to single combat. The hot-headed Roman accepted – breaking the edict against duelling just issued by his father.

Livy tells us 'they charged with levelled lances, but the lance of Manlius glanced off the helmet of his enemy, and that of Maecius passed over the neck of the other's horse. Then, as they pulled their horses around, Manlius, who was the first to gather himself up for a second thrust, pricked his enemy's charger between the ears. The pain of this wound made the horse rear and toss his head so violently that he threw off his rider. Maecius, raising himself with lance and shield, was struggling to his feet after the heavy fall, when Manlius plunged his lance into Maecius' throat, so that it came out through his ribs and pinned him to the ground.'

Manlius then stripped Maecius of his armour, arranged it into a portable trophy, and with his troopers cheering him, rode back to camp to brag about his deed. Perhaps the young noble believed that being the son of the consul exempted from the



edict against duelling? If so, he was very wrong.

The Elder Manlius was a famous duellist: he won the name Torquatus in 361 BC when he beheaded a Gallic champion and took his gold torque, but he had obtained his commander's permission to accept the Gaul's challenge. The consul did not congratulate his son, but called for his lictors (attendants armed with rods and axes) to arrest Manlius. The grim consul passed sentence before the massed legions and cavalry squadrons, and Manlius was beheaded with a lictor's axe. 'Torquatus' name became a byword for brutal discipline. However, he does seem to have spared his son the usual scourging with rods prior to execution.

In 143 BC, Occius Achilles was serving in Spain as legate to the stern disciplinarian Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus. Metellus was the kind of general who did not accept failure. His men were in the habit of making wills on the battlefield because after any retreat Metellus would send them straight back at the enemy. One day, as Occius was about to sit down to a meal, he received a message that a Celtiberian had challenged him to single combat and was waiting beyond the ramparts of the Roman camp. Aware that Metellus would not sanction the duel, Occius had his arms and horse led secretly out of the camp. Occius then slipped out, donned his fighting gear and rode to meet the Celtiberian. One gets the impression he had done this before!

The Spanish warrior charged as soon as he saw Occius, but was quickly dispatched. Exultant in his swift victory, Occius stripped the Spaniard and, in contrast to his stealthy exit, re-entered the Roman camp in triumph. Metellus' reaction is not recorded but Occius did not suffer the fate of Manlius, perhaps because this duel occurred outside of a battle, or perhaps Occius was too valuable an officer to execute.

Occius was subsequently challenged by Pyresus, 'who surpassed all the Celtiberians in nobility and courage.' Once again the Roman was victorious, but he spared the life of the young Spanish nobleman. Occius was evidently impressed by Pyresus' courage and spirit and entered into *hospitium* (guest-friendship) with him. This lessened the disgrace of the Pyresus' defeat and survival. The two exchanged gifts to secure their bond. Occius gave the Spaniard his sword and received in return a fine cloak, and then they clasped hands in friendship. The chivalrous Occius, a true Roman knight, was killed in an ambush in Lusitania in 140 BC.



**Modern reconstructions of early Imperial cavalry equipment. Note the quiver for light javelins, and the horned saddle. The Romans did not have stirrups, but adopted this saddle from the Gauls. Experiments have demonstrated that the four horns hold the rider firmly in place and would have allowed the Romans to fight as shock cavalry. (Wolfgang Sauber)**

### Great general

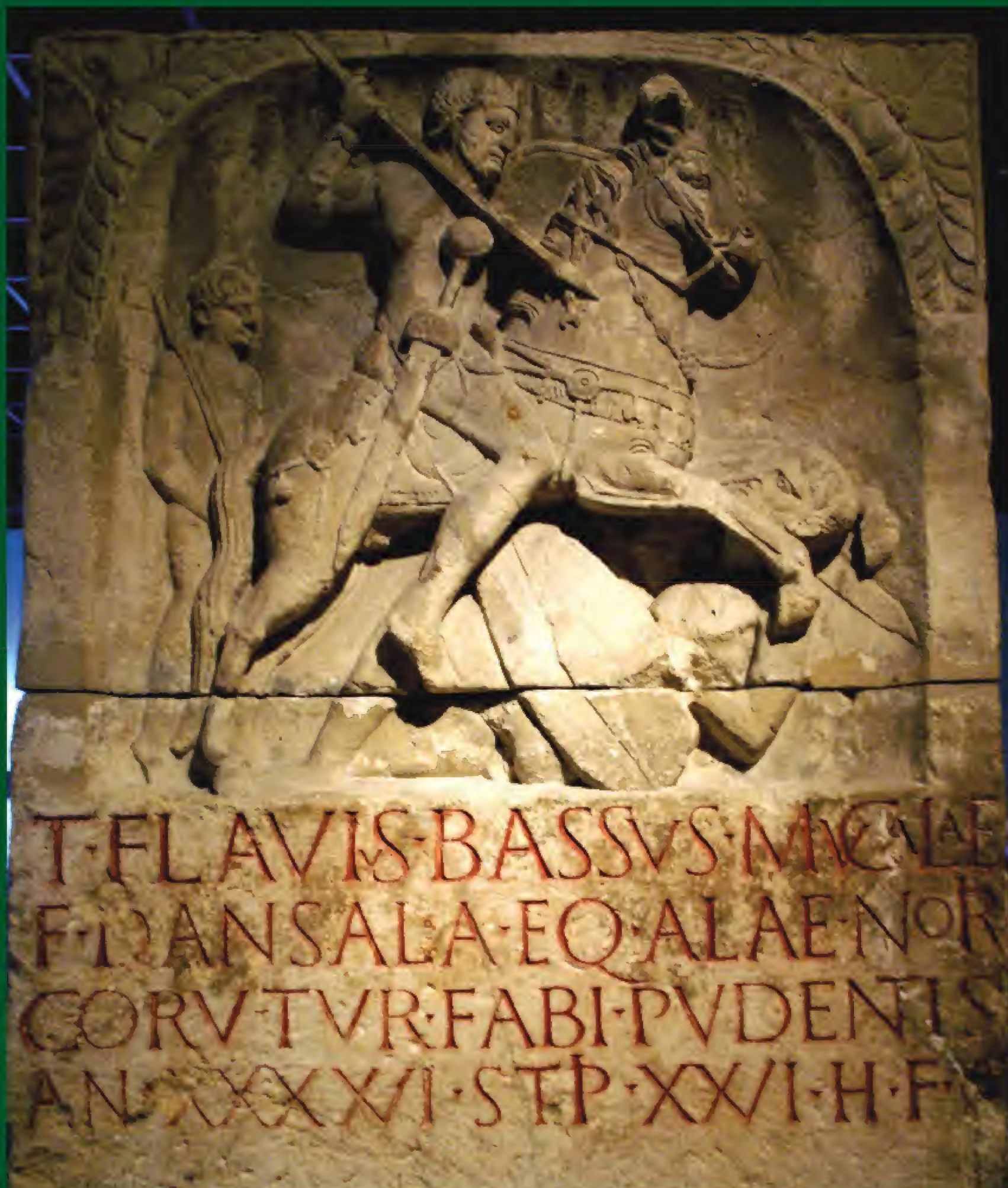
Gaius Marius, one of Rome's greatest generals, made his reputation as a young cavalry officer. In 133 BC, he was aged about 24 and serving under Scipio Aemilianus at the siege of Numantia—the small Spanish city that had defied every army Rome sent to take it, only finally falling to the siegecraft of Aemilianus, best known as the destroyer of Carthage.

According to Appian, Marius 'encountered and cut down an enemy before the eyes of his general', presumably during one of the Numantine sorties. Aemilianus would have appreciated Marius'

feat of arms. Earlier, in 151 BC, Aemilianus slew a Celtiberian chief in single combat.

In the usual stand-off that preceded a battle, the Celtiberian rode out of his army and jeered the Romans, challenging any of them to single combat. He even dismounted and performed a triumphal dance. The Celtiberian repeated this insulting routine several times. Aemilianus became so incensed that he apparently charged out from the Roman line without seeking the permission of his commander. The Celtiberian was waiting for him and killed Aemilianus' horse, forcing the Roman to jump out of the saddle as the beast





On this typical early Imperial cavalry tombstone, Flavius Bassus is depicted as a triumphant rider, but note the servant (calo) to the left. In battle, the calo would follow his master into action, leading the cavalryman's remounts and carrying spare weapons. (Autumnal Fires)



The Great Ludovisi Battle Sarcophagus commemorates a general or Imperial prince of the mid-3rd century AD. His extraordinary tomb depicts a chaotic battle in which Roman cavalry and infantry fight side by side, but relations between the two branches of the army were often strained. (Marie-Lan Nguyen)



The freshly severed head of a Caledonian on a victory monument of the Twentieth Legion, c AD 140. Interestingly, the monument celebrates the martial prowess of the legions' cavalry (each Imperial legion had only 120 riders). (Ross Cowan)

collapsed. Somehow he managed to land on his feet. Unfortunately, no other details of the fight survive, except for the notice of Aemilianus' victory.

Marius was duly decorated and promoted. He was also invited to dine with Aemilianus. Marius was from a wealthy and important provincial Italian family, but he was not related to the aristocracy of Rome. He was a 'new man' from Arpi, a central Italian town conquered by Rome in 305 BC, and being entertained by Scipio Aemilianus marked the acceptance of Marius into the ranks of the Roman elite. According to legend, when after dinner conversation turned to Rome's great leaders and generals, Marius flattered Aemilianus. 'Where will the Roman people find such a commander to replace you?' he mused. Aemilianus returned the flattery by saying 'Perhaps here', tapping Marius on the shoulder.

Aemilianus was right. Marius' greatest hour came 30 years later, when he reorganised the Roman army and saved

Italy by routing the Germanic Teutones, Ambrones and Cimbri at the epic battles of Aquae Sextiae and Vercellae in 102 and 101 BC. Marius was outmanoeuvred by his political opponents after Vercellae. As Pompey was to discover in the middle of the 1st century BC, military success did not necessarily translate into political influence in Rome.

Marius spent a decade in the shadows, only returning to the fray in 90 BC, when he defeated the Marsi ('men of Mars') in battle during the so-called Social War, the great revolt of Rome's Italian allies (the Latin for ally is socius, hence 'social'). It was a bitter encounter. The military reputation of the Marsi was such that the Romans had a proverb, 'No triumph over the Marsi, or no triumph without the Marsi', but Marius left 6,000 of them dead. After this success, he was sidelined for a second time, his former protégée Cornelius Sulla securing the prestigious command against Mithridates the Great of Pontus.

Marius attempted to impress his worth

on the populace of Rome by going daily to the Campus Martius (field of Mars) to practice cavalry drill with the city's young horsemen. A biographer notes that Marius, despite his age and being rather portly, 'demonstrated he was still agile under arms and a fine horseman, competing with determination'. The displays did impress the Roman lower classes and they came to the training ground to watch the old warrior, but the embittered Marius wanted more than the cheers of the plebs. He seized control of Rome in 87 BC and slaughtered his enemies. He died of natural causes in January 86 BC, but his revenge was not complete, for the hated Sulla was still alive and winning glory in Greece.

### Decisive charges

Unlike Marius, Sulla was a true blue Roman aristocrat. He was charismatic, ambitious, cruel, and in the final decade of the 2nd century BC served as Marius' deputy in the wars against Jugurtha in North Africa (a conflict dominated by light



cavalry engagements) and the Germanic invaders of Gaul and Italy. Sulla learned his lessons well, and became a more creative general than Marius, especially in the deployment of cavalry.

At the battle of Chaeronea in 86 BC, Sulla placed his cavalry on the wings of his army, where they could protect the flanks of the legions and were well positioned to envelop the enemy – the phalanx and cavalry (including chariots) of Mithridates of Pontus. Sulla deployed his legions in three lines, but with continuous intervals, running from rear to front, through the formation.

When the Pontic chariots attacked, Sulla's legionaries and light troops drove them back with a hail of missiles. The chariots retreated in disorder and obstructed the advancing phalanx. Sulla sought to exploit the confusion and led the legions forward. Archelaus (Mithridates' commander in Greece) swiftly countered by sending his cavalry into the gap between the armies to screen their phalanx until order was restored. He could see that Sulla's cavalry was still on the wings, and was doubtless ready to counter any move it made, but the Pontic general's surprise was total when part of the Roman cavalry suddenly advanced through intervals in the legionary formation and launched a head-on charge. The cavalry on the flanks followed and all of Archelaus' army was engulfed.

Plebeian legionaries thought that noble cavalrymen were yahoos, but the flank attacks and head-on charges made by the cavalry were decisive in several important battles. The cavalry class of the new

Roman Republic established its reputation almost immediately at the battle of Lake Regillus in 499 BC. It was believed that the cavalry gods, Castor and Pollux, led the Roman riders to victory over their Latin rivals. During the Samnite Wars, the Roman cavalry helped to secure victory at the critical encounters of Sentinum and Aquilonia in 295 and 293 BC, by launching a devastating flank attack in the former battle, and surprise head-on charge (similar to the tactic employed at Chaeronea) in the latter.

### **Last hurrah**

The young aristocrats of Rome largely abandoned cavalry service in the 1st century BC, preferring to seek advancement as staff officers or in politics. The last hurrah of the noble Roman cavalryman occurred at the battle of Munda in 45 BC. One of Julius Caesar's men, perhaps a centurion or even a cavalry officer, has left us an eyewitness account.

The anonymous Caesarian wrote that the Pompeians were too timid to leave their position on high ground, except for Antistius Turpio. He was a patrician Roman, and 'confident in his strength, he began to proclaim that none of his opponents was his equal.' Then a rider emerged from Caesar's battle line, a Spaniard called Pompeius Niger. He was probably a local nobleman and his name indicates that he was given Roman citizenship by Pompey (Gnaeus Pompeius), perhaps during the Sertorian War of the 70s BC, but he was now Caesar's man.

The anonymous witness continues that

Niger 'advanced from our ranks to meet him. Because Antistius' ferocity had made everyone watch instead of concentrate on their task [constructing fortified camps], the battle lines were set out: for it was unclear which of the warring principals would be victorious, so that it seemed that the duel would bring the war to an end. Thus eager and intent, each man favoured his own side and willed it to win. Alert and courageous, they came down to the flat ground to fight, and their shields and battle decorations shone...'

Unfortunately, the account breaks off at this point, but it seems that the duel was overtaken by a running skirmish. When the anonymous text resumes, Caesar has won the battle, but of Antistius and Niger we hear no more.

### **Imperial troopers**

In the final years of the Republic and throughout the Imperial era, cavalry was mostly recruited from subject and allied peoples. These auxiliaries were readily assimilated into the Roman army and rewarded with citizenship on completion of service. By the late 2nd century AD, cavalry battle groups were organised for particular campaigns and deployed in great outflanking manoeuvres to assail unsuspecting enemy armies in the rear. The generals of Septimius Severus were particular exponents of this tactic, routing the armies of his imperial rivals at Issus and Lugdunum in AD 194 and 197.

Many of the 'soldier-emperors' who seized power in the 3rd century AD were former cavalry officers and generals.



A cavalry mask helmet from the Roman fort at Newstead in Scotland. Ammianus Marcellinus, a Roman soldier and historian, said that the cavalry cataphracts of his day, mid-to-late 4th century AD, looked more like polished statues than men! (Ross Cowan)



Relief from the Roman forum depicting the cavalryman Marcus Curtius. According to legend, a chasm opened up in the forum in 362 BC. It could not be filled, so the young noble charged into it to placate the gods. An Imperial copy of a Republican original dating to c 200 BC, the relief illustrates the kind of arms and armour used by Roman cavalry in the war with Hannibal. (Lalupa)



Maximinus, reigning AD 235-238, began his military service as a common trooper. Although Roman emperors were often competent generals, they did not, for obvious reasons, engage in hand-to-hand combat. Maximinus changed all that. He was the first Roman emperor to fight in battle and he did so from horseback—once a cavalryman, always a cavalryman.

Prior to his elevation to the throne in AD 270, Aurelian commanded the elite cavalry corps of the field armies of emperors Gallienus and Claudius II. He was one of the architects of the crucial Roman victory over the Goths at Naissus in AD 269, where most of the alleged 50,000 casualties were inflicted by the cavalry corps. According to the historian Zosimus, the Roman infantry were jealous of the cavalry's success and requested that the emperor let it pursue the remnants of the Gothic army alone. Claudius acceded but the infantry came to grief when the Goths rallied at Mount Haemus. The cavalry corps, probably led by Aurelian, had to extricate the shame-faced infantry.

Aurelian's skill as a cavalry commander was essential in his campaigns to defeat Palmyra, a Syrian city-state with a powerful army of light horse archers and fully armoured heavy cavalry nicknamed *clibanarii*, or 'oven men'.

The battle of the River Orontes in AD 272 is notable because the Roman infantry played no part—it was deliberately separated from the cavalry by the river. Aurelian ordered his mostly light cavalry to advance against the enemy, but to break off its attack and retreat as if in fear. Like all other ancient warriors, the Palmyrenes could not resist the chance to pursue and cut down cowardly opponents, but the lighter Roman horse led the Palmyrenes on such a merry chase that the fully armoured riders and horses soon became exhausted under the heat of the Syrian sun and gave up the pursuit. The Roman cavalry then halted, turned and launched a devastating attack on the disorganised enemy.

Aurelian attempted to repeat this success at the subsequent battle of Emesa, but the Palmyrenes, perhaps making greater use of their light horse archers, caught up with the Roman cavalry and pursued it past the Roman infantry. The Roman cavalry was brought to a halt, perhaps by some natural obstacle, or simply out of a desire to fight it out with men they had previously defeated, but they had the worst of it.

While this was going on, Aurelian ordered his infantry (legionary detachments, the Praetorian Guard and specialist clubmen from the garrison of Syria Palaestina) to turn about and

charge the Palmyrenes in the rear. When they realised what was happening, the Palmyrenes attempted to escape, many riding down their own men in the process, but most were trapped between the Roman infantry and cavalry. Here the Palestinian clubmen demonstrated their value. The fully armoured *clibanarii* were well protected from edged weapons, but the clubmen simply knocked them from their mounts and bludgeoned them to death.

### Fought bare-chested

The Greek cavalry officer Polybius was held hostage in Rome in the mid-2nd century BC. He was fascinated by the warrior culture of his captors, noting that Roman cavalrymen had once fought bare-chested. Why? These rich men could certainly afford armour. They did so out of bravado. It exposed them to danger and it was more heroic.

Unless they were scouts or specialist light cavalry, Imperial Roman horsemen charged into battle wearing armour, but they inherited the bravado of their early Republican predecessors. When held in check by stern commanders like Aurelian, the cavalry of the Roman Empire was deadly and efficient, but when led by lesser generals, the innate bravado of the cavalry could be its undoing. The battle of Adrianople in AD 378 is a prime example of how a Roman army was brought to disaster by the cavalry.

The impatient cavalry on the right wing of the Roman army attacked the Goths' defensive laager before the cavalry on the left wing completed its deployment. The Romans supposed that the Gothic cavalry was in the laager, but it was in fact returning from a foraging mission, and the Gothic horsemen charged through the half-formed Roman left wing and proceeded to 'roll up' the Roman infantry. The Roman infantrymen became so crushed together that they could not lift their weapons. Unlike the cavalry on the right flank, they had no opportunity to escape and the ranks only opened up after the Goths had killed thousands of men.

Adrianople was the Cannae of the Late Roman Empire, but despite calls from the likes of Vegetius for the re-establishment of the classic legion (the legion had declined to a second-class unit of 400-1200 men), the influence of the cavalry did not wane. In fact, in the 5th and the 6th centuries AD, cavalry was the predominant element in the Roman army. It was a new heroic age, witnessing a revival of the practice of single combat by Roman champions, cavalry officers of high rank, immense prestige, and dazzling



Roman coins depicting (top) Marcellus carrying the *spolia opima* taken from Viridomarus into the temple of Jupiter Feretrius, and (bottom) Sergius Silus brandishing a head taken in battle. The long hair suggests it was hacked from a north Italian Gaul. (Ross Cowan)




Horse armour of south Italian manufacture, 5th century BC. The workshops of Tarentum and the other great Greek colonies provided the nobility of the Italic tribes with flamboyant armour. (Ancient Art)

skill at arms. A hero like Althias was so fast that he caught in his hand the javelin hurled at him by a powerful Moorish king, while Areobindus spurned the use of regular weapons and brought down an 'immortal' guardsman of the Sasanian king with his lasso.

It does not matter that Areobindus was of Gothic extraction, or that Althias was of Hunnic descent. They were the proud warriors of Rome and worthy as successors to Cornelius Cossus and Scipio Aemilianus as exemplars of Roman valour •





Exhausted 7th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders during a break in the desperate fighting near Abbeville, France, June 1940, where the 51st Highland Division was shattered by the German blitzkrieg.

# Vengeance for St Valery

Humiliated by the Germans in 1940, the Highland 51st Division struck back in North Africa. PETER MARRIOT follows the advance of the fighting Scots.

**A**ndrew Meldrum was a bricklayer's apprentice when he saw the Second World War come to Scotland. He was building a swimming pool at the Royal Navy base at Rosyth when he saw the first German air raid on British soil. He and his mates took cover as nine Junkers Ju-88 bombers swooped low to attack the ships in the Firth of Forth. One bomb came perilously close to hitting a passenger train on the Forth Bridge, the main link to the Highlands from Edinburgh. The bombers struck two small battle ships and killed 16

naval personnel, but were chased away by RAF Spitfires that shot down two of the Ju-88s. It was 16 October 1939. A month later, Meldrum received his call-up papers. He reported to barracks in Perth and became No 2758507, Private Meldrum, 2nd Battalion, Black Watch.

For the next six years, Meldrum would serve in every major theatre of the war from France to Egypt to Crete to Burma. His remarkable career embodied the wide-ranging demands on the Highland soldier in the Second World War—his tenacity, his bravery, his endurance—or,

as one regimental curator put it, 'the 2nd battalion had all the shit jobs.'

## **Black Watch**

Meldrum embraced the square-bashing, becoming quite skilled at rifle drill and the spit and polish demanded from him. The Black Watch regularly marched into the town of Perth to show everyone they were being methodically transformed from civvies into soldiers. A piper led them and they wore their dark tartan kilts, but, in reality, this was the end of the road for the kilted fighting man. Khaki battledress was

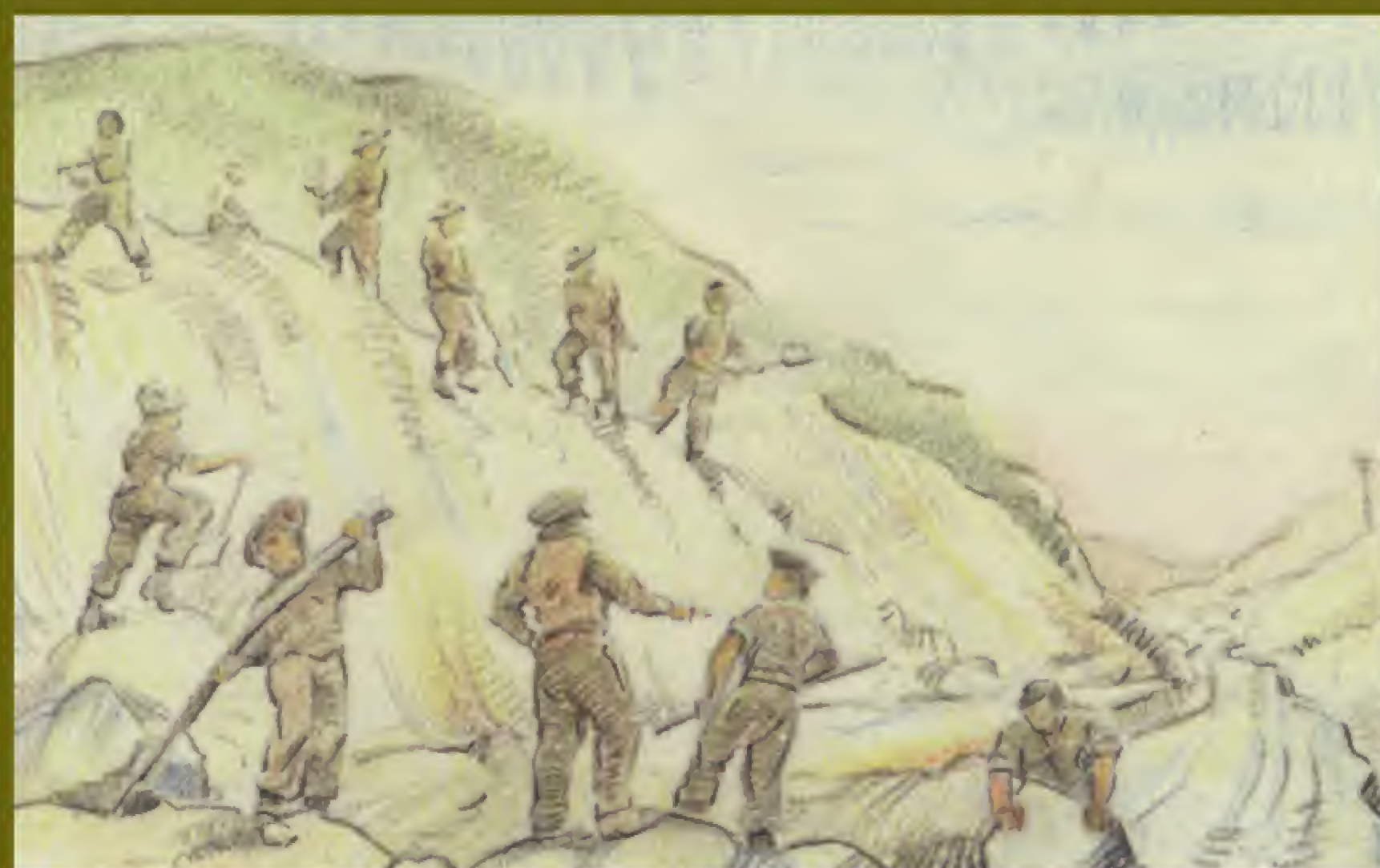


now the official combat outfit of every soldier in the British Army. When they went to war, they looked like workmen equipped for the job of defending their nation's liberty. One of the particular reasons given for the demise of the kilt was the threat of skin-blistering mustard gas, but kilts were worn by pipers and drummers and sometimes, in the first year of the war, a few die-hard soldiers still wore them in the combat zone.

In January 1940, Meldrum was one of 100 Black Watch from the 2nd Battalion drafted to join the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in France. The Germans had won a quick campaign in Poland and were shifting their attention to the west where their next move was to be against Scandinavia. To the British, it was still a phoney war and Meldrum was more concerned about the poor state of French toilets. 'The train which took us down to Abbeville had only a hole in the floor for the toilet,' remembered Meldrum. 'I thought this to be very backward and not at all like home.'

Meldrum's task was to help build a field hospital next to a chateau at Abbeville. The material they were given came from the First World War, right down to the duckboards to cover muddy ground. After four months of this, the war came to France. German blitzkrieg forces swept through Holland and Belgium, pushing back the British Expeditionary Force to the coast. The 51st Highland Division was further south, sitting in trenches defending the French Maginot Line when the German panzers simply drove round them. Private John Clarke was in the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch when he was ordered to fall back with the rest of the 51st Highland Division and fight a rearguard action to protect the BEF as it raced to evacuate soldiers from French coastal ports. Clarke and his Highlanders marched in the dark and dug in during the day to shelter from the constant air attacks. 'The marching by night was terrible,' recalled Clarke, 'as most of us were walking as if in a trance for lack of sleep.'

Meldrum and his 100 2nd Battalion Black Watch tried to link up with Clarke and the 1st Battalion but were forced back by German Stuka dive-bomber raids. They tried to join the 4th Battalion and the rest of the 51st Highlanders, but again were cut off by German aerial bombardments. Back in Rouen, their commanding officer told them to make their way to the fishing port of St Malo where they could be shipped back home. It was a long march over 100 miles and by the time Meldrum got there he was feeling ill. His feet were bad and a ticket



Scots soldiers clear road on the way to Tripoli in January 1943. Sketch by Aston Fuller.

was pinned on his jacket as he was carried on to a hospital ship. On the quayside, he saw soldiers of the 51st Division queuing up patiently, fully armed and combat weary. They had fought their way out. By the time, Meldrum got back to Britain, his feet had become badly infected. 'When my wife came to visit me in hospital,' said Meldrum, 'I handed her the entire skin from my left foot which they had removed as it was completely black.'

### Engaging tanks

Meldrum had escaped the Germans, but Clarke was not so lucky. The 1st Battalion of the Black Watch fought side by side with the French at Abbeville to halt the German advance, but they could not hold them back for long. In the meantime, the Germans were cutting off all escape routes along the French coast. The 4th Battalion conducted a fighting retreat but were lucky to get on boats at Cherbourg. The 1st Battalion was falling back towards Le Havre with the rest of the 51st Division when they took up positions at the little port of St Valery-en-Caux late on 10 June.

It was a desperate situation for the 51st. German tanks and artillery drove up to the heights overlooking the harbour, threatening any Royal Navy vessels that might dare to rescue them. German aircraft howled overhead. General Erwin Rommel, commander of the 7th Panzer Division, offered surrender to Major General Victor Fortune of the 51st, but he rejected it. Instead, Highlanders built barricades with their bare hands in the streets of the port to block the German tanks. They fought like wild cats.

'They engaged the first tank—shot at it, killing the crew and putting it out of action,' said one London soldier watching

the Highlanders. 'Then the second tank slewed round, so they fired at it and put that one out of action. The third tank turned round and drove off.' The Highlanders might be able to see off tanks, but there was little they could do against Stuka dive-bombers and long-range artillery battering the fishing village.

They fought on, but running short of ammunition, they were told that the Royal Navy would not be able to evacuate them. Even then, Major General Fortune and his Highlanders wanted to carry on fighting. On the morning of 12 June, the French contingent, trapped in the village alongside them, had had enough and ran up a white flag on the steeple of a church in St Valery just a hundred yards from the 51st headquarters. Fortune was furious and ordered it brought down immediately, not knowing it was by the order of the French commander. Captain Ian Campbell, the Duke of Argyll and a British intelligence officer, was sent to take it down and discovered a frightened Moroccan Major who had climbed into the belfry to hang out the white flag.

Argyll was ordered to confront the French commander and tell him that 'the 51st had no intention of surrendering and would continue to fight, if necessary entirely independently of the French.' They were brave words, but the French commander showed Argyll his own definite orders to surrender, dated two hours earlier. As Argyll returned to the divisional headquarters, he saw German tanks rolling along the streets of Valery, while shells and machine-guns bullets rained down around him. Despite their courage, the situation was impossible and Fortune had to accept surrender and order his men to lay down their arms.





**Cameron Highlander of the re-formed 51st Highland Division takes an Axis prisoner after the battle of El Alamein in November 1942.**

The fighting tradition of the 51st had come to an end too early in the war. More than 10,000 Highlanders became Rommel's prisoners. When Fortune was introduced to the German commander, he announced his decision to accept capitulation but added he would not have been standing there if his force had any ammunition left.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill blamed the French for this disastrous loss of men. 'I was vexed,' he later wrote in his history of the war, 'that the French had not allowed our division to retire on Rouen in good time, but had kept it waiting until it could neither reach Havre nor retreat southward, and thus forced it to surrender with their own troops.' But it has been argued that the 51st had already been sacrificed for the good of the Anglo-French alliance, when Fortune was placed under the command of the French and had no authority to abandon his allies and escape to the coast.

Whatever the true reasons behind this debacle, Churchill was right when he said that the 'fate of the Highland Division

was hard.' As the 51st were rounded up by their captors, Private Clarke felt humiliated: 'We were lined up on the road where we were searched by the Germans. I don't know about the rest of the lads but I felt about two feet tall as they helped themselves to anything they fancied.'

John Clarke and his comrades faced a long march into captivity. Some of the wounded Highlanders fell down at the side of the road, never to get up again. Clarke teamed up with two mates and, when they could, they broke away from the column to grab vegetables from fields and pick up bundles of wood. When they stopped at night, herded into a field, they made fires with sticks and roasted vegetables. When officers discarded their greatcoats, Clarke and his friends picked them up and wore them to gatecrash into the officers' enclosure at night. It meant they got a better meal than the other ranks, but they were soon spotted by Black Watch officers who told the Germans and they were kicked out.

The Germans delighted in mocking their prisoners. On one occasion, they

stood at the edge of a field and threw a loaf of bread at the hungry Highlanders. One soldier grabbed the bread but then was jumped on by other starving men. 'The Germans kept repeating this all the time,' noted Clarke, 'laughing their heads off at the scene below.' Clarke got his revenge on the Germans by surviving the ordeal and eventually escaping back to Britain. Just seven weeks after the capture of the 51st Highlanders at St Valery, the 9th (Highland) Infantry Division based in Scotland was re-titled the 51st. They too would have their vengeance.

### **Rommel's presence**

When Private Andrew Meldrum was fit again for service, he was sent back to Perth to rejoin the Black Watch. The majority of the 2nd Battalion were in East Africa fighting the Italian army that had launched an attack on British Somaliland from Abyssinia. At one stage, and vastly outnumbered, the Black Watch covered the withdrawal of the King's African Rifles by fixing bayonets and charging down hill at the Italians in a splendidly old fashioned





Seaforth Highlanders advance on the Mareth Line.

Highland assault. Meldrum missed this, but rejoined his battalion in Egypt after sailing around Africa via Cape Town.

The Black Watch moved out into the North African desert but was not directly involved in the defence of Tobruk, beginning in April 1941. An Australian division took on the brunt of this fighting against General Erwin Rommel and his Afrika Korps. After his brilliant panzer victories in northern France, the 50-year-old German general had been sent to North Africa to stiffen the resolve of the Italians who had lost thousands of their soldiers as prisoners. Rommel's presence struck dread in the British Army who began to doubt their ability to win against him. The nine-month struggle for Tobruk took on an epic quality as it developed into a personal duel between Rommel and the British.

During April 1941, the 2nd Black Watch carried out patrols and more training. Worryingly, one exercise included learning how to swim in full combat gear. Their instructor, a Major, showed them how to keep their weapons dry while crossing a river. With a Bren gun on his shoulders, he boldly jumped into a swimming pool—and sank straight to the bottom. 'He had to be rescued by some of the lads,' remembered Meldrum, 'and after this incident we nicknamed him the "Mad Major".'

Before the Black Watch could be committed to the defence of Tobruk, they were sent to another Allied crisis fast

developing in the Mediterranean. To help out the Italians yet again—this time they had botched an invasion of the Balkans—Hitler committed his forces to a blitzkrieg attack on Greece. A British army withdrew to Crete and received reinforcements from Egypt in the hope of holding the island. The 2nd Battalion were part of this and were given the task of defending the airfields at Heraklion.

The mountainous landscape of Crete reminded Meldrum of the Highlands and to avoid some German air raids they hid in caves. The Highlanders dug slit trenches around the airfield and set up minefields ahead of their positions. They were expecting a conventional attack from the sea, but what they got was a new form of warfare—aerial assault by paratroopers. From 20 May, following a savage air bombardment, thousands of German paratroopers dropped on key positions on the island. 'The air was thick with them,' said Meldrum, 'and like sitting ducks, they were slaughtered. I don't think many of them survived.'

A second wave of paratroopers landed in the valley near the airfield. Some of them grouped at a farmhouse but the Black Watch blew it apart. Meldrum went through the enemy dead, collecting their identity discs. 'One of the bodies which I came across was bloated and was sending up a nauseating stink.' The Germans had failed to take Heraklion airfield, but

elsewhere they were successful and the Black Watch received orders to evacuate their position and make their way at night through vineyards to ships waiting for them on the coast. Meldrum and his Highlanders caught the last ship off the island. Another ship in the convoy was bombed on its way to Alexandria and over 100 Black Watch went down with it.

The situation was looking bleak for the British in the Middle East. Rommel repulsed a British attempt to relieve Tobruk. Meldrum and his 2nd Battalion were brought up to strength by the addition of over a hundred Southern Rhodesians and then sent into Tobruk to replace the Australians. 'Our biggest fear was not so much the enemy,' said Meldrum, 'as the booby traps and mines that the Aussies had left behind.'

The Germans constantly bombed the harbour of the besieged city, but the Royal Navy defied them and kept bringing in supplies. Some of the activities devised by the Highlanders to keep themselves entertained included illegal gambling. Three Black Watch fife-players were always trying to raise money for drinks and when they got a skin-full were happy to take on anyone who challenged their regiment, including a fight with some equally drunk Green Howards.

### Attack at dawn

In November 1941, the British began a major offensive to end the stalemate at Tobruk. Their tanks battled against Rommel's Afrika Korps in the desert at Sidi-Rezegh, while the garrison joined in the fighting. On 20 November, 2nd Battalion Black Watch advanced with tank support. The attack was at dawn and every Highlander was given a tot of rum. Meldrum was armed with a Bangalore torpedo to throw over the barbed wire of the enemy positions and blast their way through. He considered it a suicide mission as he felt sure he would end up stepping on the tripwire of a German mine.

When the time came, Meldrum managed to avoid any traps and his mates passed through relatively unscathed. He took three German prisoners, but when he returned he found his commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel George Rusk, in tears. Another company of Black Watch, including many of the Rhodesians, had been badly shot up by German machine guns, with over a hundred dead. Their Pipe Major Roy, though wounded in both legs, had kept on playing Highland Laddie and other tunes, which kept up their spirits, but it had been a savage mauling and Rusk felt it badly.



Rommel managed to check the initial offensive, but the British held their nerve, pushed ahead again and surrounded some of the German forces, eventually pressing them to withdraw. For the moment, the British had saved the situation in North Africa but the final showdown was to come a year later in 1942. Meldrum and his Highlanders had done their bit and were removed from the theatre to undertake some political manoeuvring in Syria where they confronted the Vichy French. For the moment, Meldrum was out of the line of fire. It was up to other Highlanders to take up the task and finish off the Germans in North Africa.

Alex Clark, from Aberdeen, wanted to join the Highlanders when he was just 17-years-old. His father had been a sergeant in the Gordon Highlanders in the First World War, was wounded and taken prisoner at Passchendaele. Some of Alex's friends had managed to get in, but he was quite small for his age and was not even shaving. The army got a copy of his birth certificate and refused to accept him, but a year later he was in. It was January 1942 and he had joined the 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders. After three months basic training in Scotland, he was put on a troop ship to Port Suez. From there, the Gordon Highlanders joined the 51st (Highland) Infantry Division and carried out several more months of training, getting used to the weather and the desert landscape. The smooth-faced Private Alex Clark was given the job of company runner, one step behind the Sergeant Major, ready to take his messages anywhere. The officer knew the young lad needed a fatherly hand and liked to keep him close.

The 51st Division was at the front of General Bernard Montgomery's plans for a major offensive in North Africa towards the end of 1942. He had halted Rommel's attempt to seize Egypt and the Suez Canal and now wanted to finish him off. So too did the Highlanders, whose comrades had been humiliated by him at St Valery. Montgomery had learned his military trade in the First World War and knew the value of a strong artillery barrage tightly followed by an infantry advance. He also wished to avoid any needless slaughter and put meticulous planning into the detail of the assault, ensuring that no soldier's life would be wasted. His men loved Monty—he had given them back their confidence—and they were determined to put on a good show for him.

Major-General Douglas Wimberley was the commander of the 51st Highland Division and he believed that the military



**Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery inspects kilt-wearing 5th/7th Gordon Highlanders prior to D-Day, 1944.**

tradition of the Highlanders was the key to their motivation. 'Tell a man his father fought well,' he said, 'his grandfather fought well—and when it comes to the bit he won't let you down.' His men returned the compliment by nicknaming him 'Tartan Tam'.

### **Charge like a banshee**

The 51st Highlanders were given an idea of what to expect fighting in North Africa by the experienced 9th Australians. They were to be one of four infantry divisions to make the initial attack at El Alamein. Besides Alex Clark's 1st Battalion of Gordon Highlanders, were two battalions of Seaforth Highlanders, three Black Watch (not Meldrum's 2nd), one Cameron, one Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders, and another battalion of Gordons.

The battle of El Alamein began on the evening of 23 October 1942 at 9.40pm. Nearly a thousand British artillery guns opened fire on German positions. Private Alex Clark found it terrifying. When the firing ceased, the bagpipes of the Highland Division sounded and they advanced into the darkness—their mission to take a five-mile corridor of the enemy line so that tanks could follow through.

Enemy guns had not wholly been silenced by the bombardment and Clark crouched

down as they advanced, but his Sergeant Major stood up as though he was on a parade ground. Firing his rifle as he led his men forward, it made him a prime target—and he was struck by a German bullet.

'My Sergeant Major fell in front of me,' recalled Clark, 'and I knew when I saw him, that he was dead. I don't know what came over me—but I picked up my rifle and charged like a banshee shouting at the Germans. I won't tell you exactly what I was shouting, but they'd killed my Sergeant Major. I thought this was a terrible thing that had happened to me, that they could do this.'

From that point on, Clark did not care if he was killed or not. He just got on with his job. Later, he was made up to Lance Corporal and then Corporal. Clark never forgot the name of his Sergeant Major—Hugh Sinclair—and visited his war memorial every year to pay his respects.

Clark and the Gordons took their objective and captured thousands of prisoners, but if they thought the battle was over, they were wrong. Rommel's Afrika Korps fell back in good order and Montgomery's army had to chase them across the desert. Some of the fighting included night raids and Clark and another Highlander blew up a German machine gun post with hand grenades. Sometimes they had to clear mines. 'We used to have





**General Erwin Rommel was the adversary of the Scots in both France and North Africa. His presence struck dread in the British Army who doubted their ability to win against him.**

to use our bayonets to dig in at an angle to feel the metal,' he recalled. 'Then you had to clear sand off the top of the mine and lift it out away to the side.' Generally, this was the job of engineers and specially converted tanks with revolving chain flails that ignited the mines. 'They were great things—but sometimes they got knocked out so readily.'

The battle of El Alamein and the pursuit lasted until the end of the year. At the same time, the Americans landed in Morocco and advanced rapidly towards the rear of the German positions in Tunisia. In March 1943, Rommel—ill and defeated—was recalled from North Africa. The battle of El Alamein was one of the decisive battles of the Second World War. It lifted Allied morale considerably and showed that the so far invincible Germans could be beaten. The 51st Highlanders had played a full part in this triumph and acquired the nickname of 'Highway

Decorators'. Derived from their divisional abbreviation, they would proudly paint a large red 'HD' on the side of buildings or on tin signs wherever they went

In February 1943, Prime Minister Winston Churchill flew into North Africa and took the salute of the 51st Highlanders as they marched in a victory parade at Tripoli. With helmets to boots polished, Signaller Aston Fuller from the Royal Artillery was attached to the Highlanders and was swept up in the honour of the moment. 'The kilted pipers, figures erect, lead,' noted Fuller. 'The gallant men march with pride... gone now is the dust and sweat... the Division is proud.' The bitter humiliation of St Valery was erased and the re-born 51st had had its revenge against General Rommel.

#### **Victoria Cross winners**

That the fighting was not completely over in North Africa was proved by the

awarding of two Victoria Crosses—the only VCs won by soldiers of a Highland regiment in the Second World War—to two Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in April 1943.

Lieutenant Colonel Lorne MacLaine Campbell was 41-years-old when he led his battalion of Highlanders into battle at night at the Wadi Akarit in Tunisia on 6 April. They took the enemy position and captured 600 prisoners, but that was only the beginning of his task. When daylight came, Campbell realised that the gap blown in an anti-tank ditch did not correspond with a vehicle lane cleared through the enemy minefields. Under heavy gunfire, Campbell took personal charge of ensuring that a gap was made ready for the Allied anti-tank guns, but as the day progressed, German tanks and soldiers increased their counter-attacks.

The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders held on, determined to keep their bridgehead into the enemy position. Campbell moved among his men, cheering them on. He had already demonstrated his close relationship to them when he led 200 Highlanders to safety in France in 1940, personally scouting out gaps through the German lines at night. Now in the desert, he rallied his troops when they faltered in the face of enemy fire and kept them holding their positions until darkness fell. At one stage he was wounded in the neck by a splinter of mortar shrapnel, but he kept on pushing his men to resist.

'This officer's gallantry and magnificent leadership when his now tired men were charging the enemy with the bayonet and fighting them at hand grenade range,' said the official citation in the London Gazette, 'are worthy of the highest honour, and can seldom have been surpassed in the long history of the Highland Brigade.'

When an officer later saw the VC-winner with a bandage around his face and asked him if he had been wounded, Campbell replied with typical understatement and a broad grin—'No, just cut myself while shaving'.

Major John Thompson McKellar Anderson of the 8th Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was one of the 200 men Campbell had brought out of France in 1940. Like his Colonel, he believed in leading from the front and showed his courage under fire during a Highland assault on Longstop Hill in Tunisia on 23 April 1943. The high point had to be taken so as to allow the Allies to break through the German line to Tunis. Anderson was second in command of the battalion and led them across the open hillside against enemy fire to take their first objective.





Gordon Highlanders—part of the 51st Division—fighting in Tunisia in early 1943.

The Highlanders suffered heavy casualties, including their commanding officer, forcing Anderson to take over and lead them to take their second objective on top of the hill with just four surviving officers and less than 40 other ranks. The fighting demanded they capture three machine gun positions and each time Anderson was the first man into the pit. He was wounded in the leg but carried on with his active leadership until the hilltop was secured and the Allies could continue their advance. On a previous occasion, when Anderson won the DSO, he was observed to ‘walk calmly along in enemy machine gun and mortar fire.’ One mortar shell landed next to him and killed or wounded everyone else close by. He merely scratched his leg and walked on.

### Centuries of gallantry

Victory in North Africa meant the Allies could use this as their base for an invasion of Italy and the first step in this campaign was the conquest of Sicily. The experienced soldiers of the 51st Highland Division took part in the operation in July 1943. Corporal Alex Clark was now in the 5/7th Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders. The British advanced up the east coast of the island and had a

tougher time than the Americans on the other side of the island. The Highlanders faced Germans methodically withdrawing before them, fighting hard to give their comrades time to evacuate from Messina. The Italians, in contrast, were mostly keen to surrender to the Allies, knowing that their part in the war was rapidly coming to a close. Clark and his Highlanders had been warned to treat the Sicilians as potential enemies, but they got on very well with them. ‘We helped them with their harvests,’ he remembered, ‘taking in the grapes and everything.’

One night, the Gordon Highlander’s band played for the local people in a town square. Captain Hamish Henderson of the 51st Intelligence section had no idea his troops were so far ahead of the frontline and was shocked to hear the sound of pipes echoing through the Sicilian hillside. He left his jeep and crept up to the village to see Clark and his Highlanders marching and dancing with the local Sicilians who were clapping their hands to the drone of the bagpipes. ‘The local Iti civilians thought our Highland pipe bands were just the cat’s pyjamas,’ wrote Henderson, who later had a distinguished career preserving traditional Scottish music.

‘I am just a clown to follow the pipes,’ said Clark. ‘The pipes were an integral part of our marching. We didn’t go marching without our piper. He didn’t play all the way, he took breaks but he was always there to drum up and give you a tune.’

At the end of the Sicilian campaign, the 51st Highland Division was sent home and ordered to prepare for another great invasion. Montgomery was to command that operation—the projected invasion of north-west Europe in 1944—and he wanted with him his veteran soldiers and that included the Highlanders. They were, by now, regarded as an elite formation and were part of what had become a war-winning team.

In a farewell order of the day read to his soldiers in Sicily, divisional commander General Wimberley paid tribute to their performance throughout the campaigns in North Africa and Sicily. It was a revival in their fighting spirit, he said, which began at ‘Alamein and the moonlit night, when you went into your first battle, new and untried as individuals, but bearing in your historic tartans and your pipes an inheritance of centuries of gallantry from your forebears, and each bearing Scotland’s banner in your hearts.’ •



# Great Military Artists



## Terence Cuneo

**T**erence Cuneo was the most prolific and successful of British artists of the military scene in the latter half of the 20th century.

His brilliant battle paintings, large commercial prints, and fine portraits of uniformed royalty and generals hang in military clubs, regimental messes and museums throughout the UK and the Commonwealth. He was favoured by the Royal Family, painted a number of pictures of the Queen and was the official artist at her Coronation in 1953.

### Life-long passion

Born in London in 1907, his parents were both notable artists who met in Paris while studying under the celebrated American painter James McNeill Whistler. His father Cyrus Cincinnati Cuneo was an American of Italian descent, a robust adventurer who boxed professionally to finance his art training. Cyrus settled in London and became 'an Englishman by preference and adoption.' He exhibited at the RA from 1905 to 1912 and worked as a roving Special Artist for The Illustrated London News.

Terence inherited not only his father's figurative skill but also his love of travel and adventure. He studied art at the Chelsea Polytechnic and the Slade, then became an illustrator for magazines and books. He started painting in oils in 1936. Throughout WW2, he served in the Royal Engineers and also as an official war artist. His engineering experience embued in him a life-long passion for painting locomotives and the railway in general, for which he is also universally famous.

After the war and in the wake of his royal patronage, he became much in demand, receiving regular commissions from both the military and commercial worlds. He travelled extensively to North and South Africa, India, North America and the Far East. He painted battle scenes, regimental celebrations, big game in Africa, and grand engineering projects. His major portraits include a fine equestrian study of HM The Queen Elizabeth as Colonel-in-Chief of the Grenadier Guards, 1963, Field Marshal Montgomery of Alamein, 1972, and King Hussain of Jordan, 1980.

### VC winners

Cuneo recorded a number of VC winners and their exploits, including the dramatic lone charge of Colonel H Jones in the Falklands War of 1982. His panoramic scene of the D-Day landings of 1944 proved a popular print when published on the 40th anniversary of the event in 1984. A visit to Tombstone, Arizona, inspired him to recreate on canvas the legendary Gunfight at the OK Corral of 1881, for which he was elected Honorary Town Marshal.

After 1956 he adopted the eccentric trademark of including a miniscule mouse in his paintings, which is quite difficult to detect. Even some of his most dignified portraits contain the signature rodent. He published his autobiography 'The Mouse and his Master' in 1977. Cuneo was awarded the OBE in 1987 and the CVO in 1994. He died in 1996, aged 88. The Terence Cuneo Memorial Trust, established in 2002, commissioned Philip Jackson to make a bronze statue of the artist, with palette in hand and mouse at his feet, that stands in the main concourse of London's Waterloo Station •

*Peter Newark*



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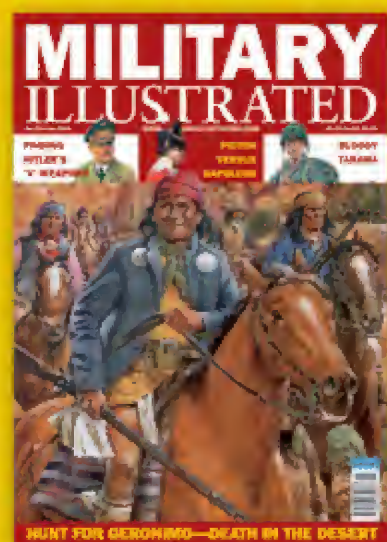
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# Re-enactors

## Civil War Controversy

This year marks the start of the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War. Museums and battlefield parks across America have begun planning commemorative events, but, says PHILIPP ELLIOT-WRIGHT, they are already running into controversy.

**T**he first commemorative event in Charleston has triggered a furious debate as to the highly emotive issue of slavery and its place in these commemorations, thus placing an additional 'political' pressure on re-enactors as they prepare to participate in events stretching until 2015. In essence, they must strive to ensure their events are relevant to the public audience of the 21st century whilst still reflecting and respecting the broad spread of beliefs of the individual participants, without whose enthusiasm the sesquicentennial events would be limited to static museum exhibitions and academic speakers.

### War of Southern Independence

The opening events in Charleston, South Carolina, were critical to the ultimate outbreak of fighting, for it was in that city that the first secession document was signed in December 1860, and subsequently the first shots when the Federal-held Fort Sumter in the harbour

was bombarded into submission on 12 April 1861. The fact is that today some Southerners still refuse to call it the Civil War, referring to it as the 'War between the states', 'War of Northern Aggression', 'War of Secession' or even the 'War of Southern Independence'.

Groups such as the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) point to numerous issues triggering the conflict, the tariffs on manufactured goods, deep seated cultural differences, the growing economic differences between the industrialising North and the still predominately agricultural South, and much more, rather than the single issue of the preservation of slavery. Indeed, it can be highlighted that it was not until mid-1863, half way through the conflict, that Abraham Lincoln began formal moves to abolish the institution. Many, and not just the SCV, believe the South was fighting a heroic battle for liberty against the insurmountable odds of a Northern invasion. Today, the Confederate battle flag still flies in the grounds

of the state parliament in Charleston and shops sell a vast range of Confederate memorabilia—a current favourite being a car sticker proclaiming that 'If at first you don't secede, try try again.'

When a commemorative secession ball in full historic clothing was held in Charleston on 20 December 2010, there was outrage. On the one side were those attending who wished to commemorate the 'courage' of the 169 men that signed the document of secession, versus those who view such events as nothing more than a glorification of the institution of slavery. This debate is today even more sensitive given America has its first black president. Most historians and groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People would point out that the 1860 South Carolina declaration 'Causes of Secession' made explicit reference to the preservation of the institution of slavery 18 times, and similar mention was made in numerous subsequent documents across the South.







### Mutual respect

However people view the conflict, it was the most traumatic in American history, being responsible for over 620,000 deaths, the physical destruction of numerous southern cities and towns, and the economic ruin of thousands. Yet, whilst the physical scars are long healed, the psychological ones remain. The simple truth is that the Civil War still divides America, albeit without the brutal vehemence it once did. Putting aside the issue of slavery, much more still divides the two sides—at the most basic level there is still two names for most battles. Thus, the first major battle, fought on 21 July 1861, is still called First Manassas in the South and First Bull Run in the North. This is because the practice of the South was to name battles after the nearest town or manmade landmark,

whilst the North chose the nearest body of water. It can be noted that the modern Federal National Parks Service generally use the Northern name as the 'headline' title, albeit a few bear the Southern—for example, the battle of Shiloh rather than Pittsburg Landing.

What is easily forgotten by many on both sides is the views of the re-enactors. It is they who provide the vast bulk of the manpower to stage any form of active event, be it living history, commemorative marches or full scale combats. Amongst the re-enactment community the raging political debate is almost unknown. This author has sat around numerous camp fires and not once, on either side of the Atlantic, has there been any argument. Rather, whilst there are obviously differences of opinion, re-enactors consistently demonstrate mutual respect.

However, the lack of respect of non-re-enactors undoubtedly impacts on the re-enactors, especially those seeking to commemorate the South. Flying the Confederate battle flag, despite being a factual historical portrayal, is prevented in some communities, whilst re-enactors can find themselves obliged to patiently listen to outside speakers haranguing the audience with views they, who have invested considerable sums of money and time to ensure an accurate historical portrayal, fundamentally disagree •







East India Company kukri bayonet, £400. (Bosley)

## Three Important Sales

**F**or antique dealers and collectors, last year concluded with three big, important sales. All three offered a wide range of really choice pieces.

At Bonham's, the prices ranged from an absolute snip of £42 for a small 17th century toy pistol, up to a very impressive £162,000 for a cased pair of presentation flintlock pistols. These were by the famed



Sea Service flintlock pistol, early 19th century, £1,800. (Bonhams)

French Versailles gunmaker Boutet. Silver mounted and in superb condition they were estimated at £50,000 to £75,000 but, as always, quality tells and the hammer did not fall until bidding had reached more than double the top estimate. The case held all the accessories including powder flask, bullet mould and rods.

A number of the lots sold for more than £10,000 and three exceeded £30,000. There was a small but very attractive number of Colt percussion revolvers, including an 1853 Dragoon with London proof marks which sold for £5,400 and a finely engraved Navy revolver with ivory grips made £3,700. In addition to the many antique firearms, there was a selection of armour, swords, powder flask and other accessories, indeed something to interest any collector.

### Zulu War Medals

The Bosley sale also offered a selection of first class Militaria ranging from badges, medals, uniforms, accessories to curiosities and ephemera. The cheapest lot at £20 was a Third Reich Afrika Korps armband, whilst the most expensive lots were medals. A somewhat surprising £2,000 was paid for a Fairbairn-Sykes Commando dagger, estimated at £600-£800, but this example bore an etched letter E on the blade which marked it out as being only one of four known examples.

The most expensive lot was a Zulu War group of three medals, including the Distinguished Conduct Medal of the 90th

Foot, which sold for £6,800. Among the Third Reich material was a Blood Order medal, which made £3,900. A 1933 Model SS dagger went for £1,000 and an 18th century rare East India pattern bayonet, with a curved kukri-style blade, fetched £400.

Good quality head-dress continues to sell well with an officer's Life Guard helmet going at near the estimate of £1,600 and a Household cavalry example making the same price. Slightly unusual were a couple of Persian kula-khud helmets, one of which with horns and a rudimentary face, made £320. Helmets of this type were primarily ceremonial items and never intended for serious use but they form an interesting group. Similar helmets made for battle are usually much plainer and simpler in design and one such example, lacking the usual mail neck guard, sold for slightly less at £280. A third example of greater interest

Indian or Persian khula khud helmet, late 19th century, £320. (Bosley)



was constructed of plate with mail panels. It was complete with sliding nasal-bar and mail neck-guard but despite this it failed to make its estimate of £450-£500.

At the lower price range were a couple of ten shilling notes which were in circulation during the Boer War sieges, but despite their rarity both failed to sell. For collectors looking for something really unusual, there was a pair of Imperial Saxon officer's sword hilts converted to candlesticks, which sold for £180. One very rare item of uniform on offer was a tunic belonging to a woman pilot of the Air Transport Auxiliary. These exceptional women flew every type of plane from fighters to heavy bombers from factory or maintenance sites to the airfields.

This one was complete with wings and had seen service from 1941 to 1945. It sold for £1,100, which does not seem expensive when there were only 150 such ladies.

### Unusual items

Last of the trio of sales was Thomas del Mar with around 370 lots of arms, armour and militaria. The quality was high and bidding was brisk with a price range of £35/£40 to £47,000. For £30, one purchaser acquired three buff leather baldricks for Bavarian court swords. The top price was paid for a Swedish Royal Sword of Honour given by Karl XIV Johan of Sweden. The blade and scabbard were elaborately decorated with engraving and gilding. Close behind this price was £45,000 paid for a North European helmet of the rare type known as an armet. It originally dated from around 1500 but in the 17th century it was adapted and fitted with a top spike so that it could be hung above the tomb of Sir Thomas Hood in a church in Hampshire.

Among the militaria was a good selection of shoulder belt plates—an item of uniform abandoned in the mid-19th century. Each regiment had its own pattern and numerous volunteer and militia



Georgian Coldstream Guards officer's shoulder-belt plate, £1,700. (Del Mar)

units also wore them. The patterns often changed over the years, making them an interesting field of collecting. Most of the plates of regular units are easy to identify but many volunteer ones often carry only a monogram. The prices went from £1,700 for a Coldstream Guard example, to £240 for two King's Own Scottish Borderers •

*Frederick Wilkinson*



# Museums & Shows

## The Brickdusts

JOHN NORRIS visits a Shropshire Regimental Museum

**N**apoleon Bonaparte called them 'The Red Regiment', but one of the nicknames by which they are better known is 'The Brickdusts'. Today, the King's Shropshire Light Infantry has many trophies from its long and distinguished history of service around the world, but the most unusual must surely be the lock of Napoleon's hair from the time when the 2nd battalion of the 53rd Regiment of Foot served guard duty over the deposed Emperor during his final exile on St Helena.

### Eight VCs

Raised in 1755, the 53rd Regiment was joined by the 85th Regiment of Foot and both combined to become a light infantry regiment in 1809 during the Peninsular

War, where it amassed a number of battle honours such as Salamanca and Vittoria. A total of eight VCs have been won by the regiment, three of which are held by the Shropshire Regimental Museum located at The Castle, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 2AT. The Regiment fought in America in 1812 and was present when the presidential mansion, later to become known as the White House, was burnt.

Service in further campaigns as the KSLI included battle honours from the Boer War, both world wars and the Korean War. Whilst serving in South Africa during the Boer War, the 2nd Battalion covered almost 6,000 miles in less than six months and fought ten actions and 27 minor engagements as part of the 19th Brigade. These feats



along with displays of weaponry, medals and uniforms and photographs preserve a fine history. After the Korean War, the regiment saw action against the Mau Mau rebels in Kenya. The museum can be contacted by telephone at 01743 262292. For more detailed information and access to records for research facilities, written applications have to be made. Opening hours can be found at [www.shropshireregiments.org.uk](http://www.shropshireregiments.org.uk)

## March UK Diary

### ■ 3: Thursday

Lunchtime lecture at the National Army Museum, London, with guest speaker Sean Longden presenting a talk entitled 'Almost Over: The Dresden Myth and the War on the Ground'. Presentation begins at 12.30pm with free entry. Further details telephone 0207 730 0717 or visit [www.national-army-museum.ac.uk](http://www.national-army-museum.ac.uk)

### ■ 5: Saturday

The Greater Peterborough Modelling Club is hosting its annual East of England Model Show for 2011 at the Town Hall in Peterborough. Doors open between 10am and 4pm. Further details telephone 01733 321617.

The North Somerset Modellers Society is hosting its Model Show at the Campus, Highlands Lane, Locking Castle, Weston-super-Mare BS24 7DX. Doors open between 10am and 4.30pm. Further details telephone 01934 416798.

### ■ 5 and 6: Saturday & Sunday

Romsey and District Railway Modellers Society is holding its 32nd Annual Exhibition at Crossfield Hall, Romsey SO51 8GL. Demonstrations and displays each day. Further details visit [www.rdrms.hampshire.org.uk](http://www.rdrms.hampshire.org.uk)

### ■ 6: Sunday

The London Park Lane Arms Fair is being held at the Marriott Hotel, Duke Street, off Grosvenor Square, London W1. Doors

open between 10am and 4pm. Entrance by catalogue priced £15 available on the door. Further details telephone 01669 620618 or visit [www.londonarmsfair.com](http://www.londonarmsfair.com)

### ■ 7: Monday

The Stockport Militaria Collectors Society is holding a 'Free and Easy' meeting at the Britannia Hotel, Dialstone Lane, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6AG. New members welcome. Meeting begins at 7.45pm. Further details telephone 01709 557622 or visit [www.stockportmilitaria.org](http://www.stockportmilitaria.org)

### ■ 10: Thursday

Lunchtime lecture at the National Army Museum, London, with guest speaker Roger JC Thomas presenting a talk entitled 'POW Camps in Britain'. Presentation begins at 12.30pm with free entry. Further details telephone 020 7730 0717 or visit [www.national-army-museum.ac.uk](http://www.national-army-museum.ac.uk)

### ■ 13: Sunday

Arms and Armour Fair is being held at the Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TZ. Further details telephone 07595 511981 or visit [www.chathamarmyfair.com](http://www.chathamarmyfair.com)

Militaria and Medal Fair is being held at the Stratford Leisure & Visitor Centre, Bridgefoot, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire CV37 6YY. Doors open between 10.30am and 2.30pm. Further details telephone 017534 534777 or email [markgcarter@bulldoghome.com](mailto:markgcarter@bulldoghome.com)

### ■ 17: Thursday

Lunchtime lecture at the National Army Museum, London, with guest speaker Roger Stearn presenting a talk entitled 'Victorian Philanthropy: Sir James Gilead and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association.' Presentation begins at 12.30pm with free entry. Further details telephone 020 7730 0717 or visit [www.national-army-museum.ac.uk](http://www.national-army-museum.ac.uk)

### ■ 19 and 20: Saturday & Sunday

'Southern Expo' is being held at the Hornchurch Sports Centre, Harrow Lodge Park, Essex RM11 1JU. Doors open 10am. Further details telephone 01708 376508. This is a massive modelling show not to be missed

### ■ 20: Sunday

Military Convention is being held at the Three Counties Showground, Wye Hall, Malvern, Worcs. This is an indoor militaria fair with a wide range of collectables on offer. Doors open 9.00am. Further details telephone 01743 762266 or visit [www.militaryconvention.com](http://www.militaryconvention.com)

### ■ 24: Thursday

Lunchtime lecture at the National Army Museum, London, with guest speaker John Spencer presenting a talk entitled 'Battle of Crete 1941.' Presentation begins at 12.30pm with free entry. Further details telephone 020 7730 0717 or visit [www.national-army-museum.ac.uk](http://www.national-army-museum.ac.uk)

*Continued on p58*



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## CRUISING IN LEYTE GULF

Marcus Nicholls examines Tamiya's latest 1:350 IJN ship kit, the Imperial Japanese Navy's Tone Heavy Cruiser

**T**he IJN's Heavy Cruiser 'Tone' was one of the vessels that made up the escort force for the December 7th 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor and just a month later, she took part in the battle for Wake Island. Following this, Tone was implicated in combat operations in the Dutch East Indies and in March 1942, she was part of Admiral Nagumo's carrier force in the attack on Ceylon. Returning to the Pacific Ocean, Tone took part in the Battle of Midway, the turning point for Imperial Japan's war in that theatre.

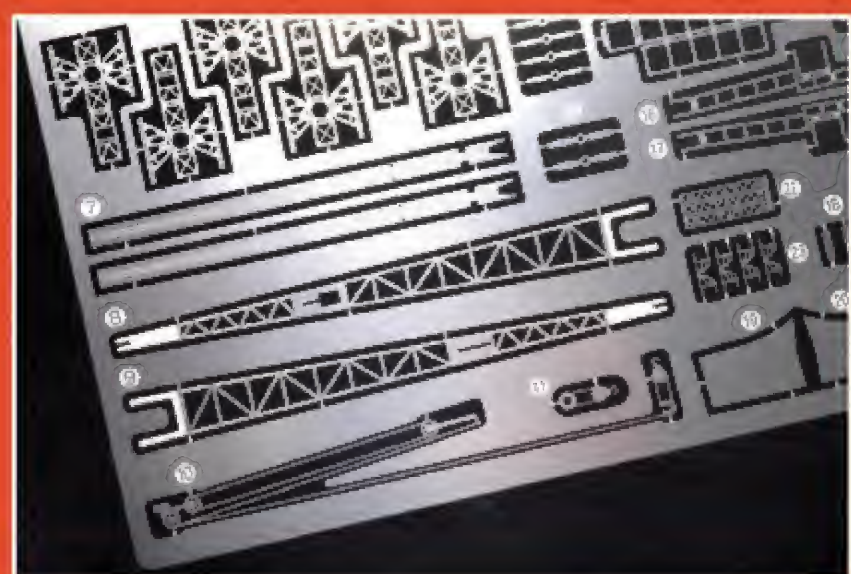
On August 2nd 1942, the vessel was damaged by United States Navy aircraft from USS Saratoga. After repair, Tone patrolled the Solomon Islands and was damaged again during air raid on her base at Rabaul in November 1943. She famously took part in the Battle of Leyte Gulf in the Philippines where, as part of Vice Admiral Kurita's force, the USS Gambier Bay carrier was sunk. Tone's fate was sealed by strikes from US aircraft after her return to home waters and was finally sunk at Nishi-Nomi Island near the Japanese port of Kure, in late July 1945.

Tamiya's new Tone model is another of the company's new generation of ship kits and it represents a state-of-the-art production with stunning levels of moulded-in detail. The hull is split at the waterline allowing the model to build full-draft or within a seascape; a flat panel is included to stabilise the hull-sides if the latter option is chosen. No less than seven lateral stiffeners (modifiable for either option) are supplied and with them in place, the hull will build into a very rigid structure. It's a complex production but the impeccable instructions guide you through; Tamiya don't go the lazy way of just making 3D renderings of the CAD data used to create the kit, theirs are hand-drawn with the specific aim to make construction pleasurable and without stress. The results speak for themselves. Another superb kit of a famous WW2 battlewagon is borne, and it's a beauty •

TAMIYA 1:350 IMPERIAL JAPANESE NAVY HEAVY CRUISER TONE KIT NO.78024

AVAILABILITY...

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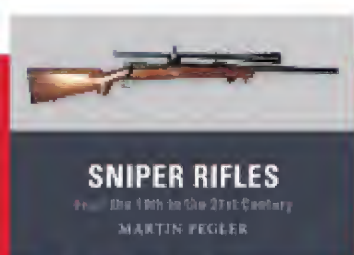
# Book Reviews

## Sniper Rifles from the 19th to 21st century

by Martin Pegler  
(Osprey) softback,  
80pp, £12.99

## The Rocket Propelled Grenade

by Gordon L Rottmann (Osprey)  
softback, 80pp,  
£12.99



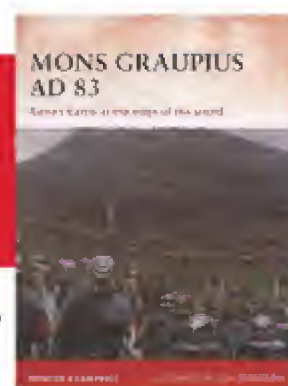
The sniper rifle seems a very modern weapon, but it should not be forgotten that it was used by the Americans in their War of Independence, by British Riflemen in the Napoleonic Wars, and by Sharpshooters in the American Civil Wars. Originally they were designed to shoot officers especially and so deprive enemy units of their Command and Control. From WW1 onwards, the weapons became more sophisticated and more deadly and also more widespread. For example, the Turks took a heavy toll on the ANZAC forces trapped on the Gallipoli beaches as they were able to shoot down gullies right into the rear areas.

Modern weapons can shoot incredible distances, such as the 2.5 km kill by a Canadian soldier in Afghanistan using a US-made .50 cal weapon. In contrast, the origins of the RPG (which actually means 'hand antitank grenade' in Czech) were of almost suicidal close-range use. The Soviet RPG-7 is as simple to use and as widespread as the Kalashnikov, with a 1,000m range. It is a favourite of irregular forces and ammunition is readily available, for use in anti-tank, anti-personnel and even anti-aircraft roles. Just how deadly these weapons can be is shown by the example of the destruction of Soviet vehicles in Grozny by Chechen rebels in early 1995, when they lost over 100 tanks and 250 AFVs fighting in built-up areas. In modern Iraq and Afghanistan, RPGs pose a constant threat to the international stabilisation forces and their civilian counterparts, not least for their bunker-busting potential.

Matthew Bennett

## Mons Graupius AD 83: Rome's battle at the edge of the world

by Duncan B Campbell  
(Osprey Campaign)  
softback, 96pp, £14.99



Some historians do not believe that the battle took place, but Campbell argues persuasively that it did. Agricola's campaigns to extend Roman rule to the most northerly regions of the British Isles lasted seven years. This is both a reminder of the large tracts of lands of territory to be 'conquered' – from Northumbria up to the Moray Firth – some 250 miles on land, while his fleets penetrated as far as the Shetlands, and the nature of the advance: largely by reconnoitring and then establishing forts where necessary whilst accepting the submission of the native tribes. The battle of AD 83 was probably fought near Inverurie in Aberdeenshire beneath the slopes of Mount Bennachie, and seems to have been a last ditch stand led by the Caledones with nothing but the inhospitable Highlands to fall back upon. Any territories won were given up by AD 90 owing to the Empire's military commitments on the Danube.

For details of the fighting we have to rely on the adulatory account of Tacitus, the victor's son-in-law. According to this, Agricola mustered some 25,000 men, half of whom were auxiliaries and it was they who did the fighting. The Caledones are attributed 30,000 men, although they were more likely outnumbered. They used chariots to allow their chiefs and best warriors to fight in the heroic style of skirmishing and then dismounting to fight. The author accepts that some of these were scythed, but this is probably an exotic touch added by Tacitus. The rest of the tribesmen lacked armour and were easily brushed aside. The illustrations are excellent: colour reconstructions, contemporary material and modern re-enactors alike. The maps and bird's-eye-views of the battle are also good, save for the 79-81 campaign which is shown with directional arrows so strangely placed as to be useless.

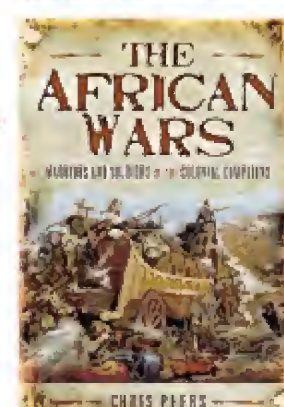
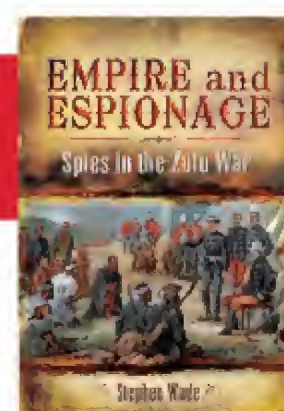
Matthew Bennett

## Empire and Espionage: Spies in the Zulu War

by Stephen Wade (Pen & Sword) hardback,  
183pp, £19.99

## African Wars: warriors and soldiers of the colonial campaigns

by Chris Peers (Pen & Sword) hardback,  
236pp, £19.99



In Empire and Espionage, the author divides his topic into four aspects: local intelligence; fluid intelligence (by which he means information coming in at the planning stage of a campaign); field intelligence, including scouting and the new and invaluable heliograph signalling machine; and human intelligence ('HUMINT', the term in use today) drawn from person-to-person contact. The situation in the 1870s was that of the 'Great Game' in which the empires of the period sought to gain advantage and territories through actions supported by extensive spy networks. In truth, South Africa was peripheral to most of this activity, although it was to yield another shock through the two Boer Wars in the next twenty years.

The Zulu War of 1879 was not initially well-handled by the British, as the disastrous defeat at Isandlwana illustrates, and intelligence lay at the core of this failure. But Lord Chelmsford turned the situation around within five months and unsurprisingly the weight of Imperial resources prevailed. The author is also a fiction crime writer and the story rattles along as he draws out the threads that are woven into this detailed picture of colonial conflict. In contrast, Chris Peers' approach is a wide-ranging study of warfare in sub-Saharan Africa in the 19th century. He deals with the impact of Western firearms and the response of the various civilisations, some very warlike like the Zulus, others more vulnerable to modern methods of war. Anyone interested in the 'scramble for Africa' will find his book a fascinating read.

Matthew Bennett



# Book Reviews

## Toyotomi Hideyosho

by Stephen Turnbull  
(Osprey Command)  
softback, 64pp, £11.99



**T**oyotomi Hideyosho (1536-98) is known as the Napoleon of Japan. Unlike that ambitious fellow, he loyally served Oda Nobunaga until his leader's death by treachery in 1582 and fought on to revenge him, effectively unifying Japan in the process. He fought in the famous battle of Nagashino in 1575, and in 1582 conducted a remarkable siege of Bitchu-Takamatsu castle, which he captured by diverting a river in order to swamp the defences. A complicated war of succession followed, and eventually Hideyosho seized power, although the final outcome was a negotiated peace that served the nation well. In addition to battles, fought with gunpowder weapons, especially arquebus-armed infantry, the siege already mentioned and a magnificent amphibious action at Shikoku Island in 1585, there is plenty for wargamers to get their teeth into in this study. As always with Osprey, the mapping and colour reconstructions of the fighting are excellent, supported by magnificent Japanese prints, although a surprising amount of these turn out to be modern interpretations. Perhaps this goes to show how popular this hero's story remains.

Matthew Bennett

## Most Secret: the hidden history of Orford Ness

by Paddy Heazell  
(The History Press in association with the National Trust) softback, 256pp, £14.99



**T**he Open University Series 'Coast' provide many viewers with their first introduction to the mysterious military environment of Orford Ness. So, for anyone interested in military scientific archaeology, this is a timely publication with an excellent series of photographs.

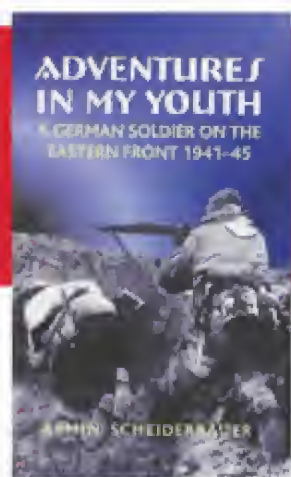
The research and tests carried out at Orford Ness played an important role in the conflicts of the 20th century from WW1 to the Cold War. The book is structured chronologically—the early chapters deal with experimental flights and armament developments including bomb design and tactics. Personality profiles of the 'boffins' such as Robert Watson-Watt, Henry Tizard and Frederick Lindemath are woven into the narrative alongside technical detail and anecdotes.

In the inter-war years there was much groundbreaking work conducted at the Ness into radio beams for position fixing and direction finding, resulting in the development of Radar. During WW2, gunnery and bombing experiments continued, including Barnes Wallis 'Tallboy' bomb. In the 1960s, research and tests into the design and construction of Britain's Atomic Bomb 'Blue Danube' and subsequent tests on the telemetry of the Polaris warhead gave the Ness a 'Dr Strangelove' image. Project 'Cobra Mist', an abortive attempt at 'over the horizon' radar, provided the swansong for the establishment. The offshore site may now be visited courtesy of the National Trust, the book's joint publisher.

John Allen

## Adventures in My Youth – a German Soldier on the Eastern Front 1941-45

by Armin Scheiderbauer,  
translated by C.F.  
Colten (Helion) softback, 208pp, £16.95



**T**his account by an Infantry Officer mainly concerns a fighting withdrawal from the area south-west of Moscow until he was captured by the Red Army as he lay wounded in hospital in Danzing (Gdansk). He was freed fairly quickly by the Russians in September 1947. Scheiderbauer's background, training and fighting are well described. He also provides perceptive portraits of his comrades and military life in general. The eldest son of a Protestant minister and an Austrian by birth, his family

moved to Thuringia and he spent his early life in Germany. A strong believer in the German Volk and a convinced patriot with a deep Christian faith, Scheiderbauer believed that a career in the Armed Forces was the only thing he could do. His reflections on the hardships and horrors of combat reveal a thoughtful man well versed in art and literature. He is, however, very circumspect about his relationship to the Nazis and Hitler, with virtually no analysis of their impact on his beloved homeland. The memoir, written for the author's daughter, provides good primary source material for those studying the reality of the practical application of the German operational art in WW2. Regrettably, the book contains no photographs or maps.

John Allen

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## March UK Diary *continued*

### 26: Saturday

Aerogumbe is being held at Shoreham Airport, West Sussex, with a wide range of collectables on offer, including books, models, uniforms and photographs. Gates open at 10am. Further details telephone 01424 753356.

The Toy Soldier Show is returning to the Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1H 0DG. Sponsored by King & Country Models, this one-day event is a must visit. Doors open 10am. Further details telephone 01388 818882 or visit [www.thetoysoldiershow.com](http://www.thetoysoldiershow.com)

### 31: Thursday

Lunchtime lecture at the National Army Museum, London, with guest speaker Dr David Allan presenting a talk entitled 'The Capture of the Eagle Commemorated: Dennis Dighton's Prize-Winning Sketch.' Presentation begins at 12.30pm with free entry. Further details telephone 020 7730 0717 or visit [www.national-army-museum.ac.uk](http://www.national-army-museum.ac.uk)

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### SS5714 - M24 Chaffee Walk Around



The M24 was armed with a 75mm main gun, the Chaffee was able to dispatch many of the foes its predecessors had unsuccessfully faced, and the M24's torsion bar suspension gave it a lower profile and smoother ride while making it an improved gun platform. Produced for the US military until 1950, the Chaffee continued to take the field around the world until well into the 1970s. Packed with over 200 photos, plus colour art and profiles; 80 pages.

### SS5713 - Panzer 38(t) Walk Around



The Panzerkampfwagen 38 (tschechisch) Armoured Combat Vehicle 38 (Czech) was one of the most important tanks in the Wehrmacht arsenal in the first half of WWII. Originally produced near Prague as a light tank LT vz. 38 - Lehty Tank vzor 38. Renamed as the German name Pz.Kpfw.38(t), the vehicle saw action in the Polish and French campaigns and took part in the invasion of the Soviet Union during the summer of 1941. Illustrated with over 300 photographs, color art, and profiles; 80 pages.

### SS7007 - Great Battles of the World: Britain 1940



The RAF Fights a Desperate Battle Against the Luftwaffe. The confrontation between Britain's Royal Air Force and Germany's Luftwaffe was the first large scale success against Hitler's aggression, and it is one of the defining episodes in the long history of the British nation. Very inclusive account includes comparison of the Spitfire Mk.I vs Bf 109E, the bombing of London, Operation Sealion, Italian involvement, foreigners in the RAF and the nature and personalities of the opposing commanders. This volume allows the reader to experience the titanic battle as never before: tactics, aircraft, equipment, uniforms, and the men and women who lived it. Enriched with color and b/w photographs (including 10 page Photographic

Tribute to the Battle of Britain), color maps, 50 aircraft profiles and 9 color uniform illustrations. A fitting tribute and record of "their finest hour", 160 pages.

### SS2044 - Italian Truck-Mounted Artillery in Action



Italian military planners saw the need for highly mobile artillery early in the 20th Century. Accordingly, Italy began mounting anti-aircraft weapons on truck chassis prior to WWI, giving birth to the autocannone, a weapon concept which would soldier through both World Wars. Other vehicles, some captured, were mated with a wide variety of weapons, often in the field. Illustrated with over 200 photographs, plus color profiles and detailed line drawings; 52 pages.

### SS5712 - M3 Medium Tank Lee (Lee & Grant) Walk Around



The M3 Medium Tank was designed as an answer to European battlefield conditions at the start of WWII. The solution was the M3's unconventional design, which features a 75mm main gun mounted in a sponson on the right, front of the hull. The British dubbed it 'General Grant' and named the US Army version 'General Lee.' This book takes a detailed look at the M3 Tank with more than 200 photographs, color profiles and detailed line drawings. 80 pages.

### SS7005 - Great Battles of the World: Berlin 1945



By the dawn of 1945, the Western Allies had driven back Hitler's last, desperate effort in the Ardennes. However, the Allies' insistence on Germany's unconditional surrender deterred the Germans from making any concession over ending the war - Hitler and the Nazi faithful saw their only option to be a fanatical Wagnerian stand leaving only Germany's ruins to commemorate the tragedy. Further, it was already clear that another kind of war was right around the corner. The Soviets had already reached Budapest and the Oder River; it was obvious who would dominate Eastern Europe. The only hope for America and Britain to retain what they could of Central Europe was to take Berlin, but the 'Russian steamroller' forestalled them. Massive Soviet forces attacked the city

in April 1945 - the last act of the confrontation between the Communists and the National Socialists and the first act of the Cold War. Illustrated with color and b/w photographs, color maps, 8 aircraft and 9 armor profiles, and 14 color uniform plates; Stavropoulos, Vourliotis, Terniotis, Kotoulas, Valmas, and Zouridis. Great Battles of the World; 128 pages.

### SS5605 - ELCO 80 PT Boat On Deck



Say "PT Boat" and the image that comes to mind is that of the 80-foot patrol torpedo boat built by the Electric Launch Company (ELCO) in Bayonne, New Jersey. A trio of Packard marine engines, delivering 1200 to 1500 horsepower each, gave the PT Boats speeds of 40 knots. Packed Over 200 photographs, plus color art and profiles; 80 pages.

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1/48 Scale Mitsubishi A6M3/3a Zero Fighter  
Item 61108 Length: 190mm

# Scourge of the Pacific



Tamiya's 1/48 and 1/32 scale models of this legendary Japanese aircraft

The Mitsubishi A6M Zero Fighter was the symbol of the Japanese aircraft industry during WWII and its service history is graced with remarkable achievements. Tamiya's 1/48 Scale Aircraft Series line-up includes all of the major representative variants of the Zero: the first truly mass-produced A6M2b Model 21, the clip-winged A6M3 Model 32, the well-balanced A6M3 Model 22, the aerodynamically-refined A6M5/5a Model 52, and the heavily-armed A6M5c Model 52c. Each features a high level of accuracy and detail and modelers can collect them all to display the evolution of the Zero's development. Furthermore, the A6M2b and A6M5 are also available in Tamiya's 1/32 Scale Aircraft Series line-up. These large models are teeming with realistic details such as movable control surfaces and retractable landing gear to give modelers an in-depth understanding of the Zero's design. Areas such as the engine and cockpit feature metal parts and photo-etched parts to provide an even more detailed finish. Pick up one of these superb model kits and experience the Zero for yourself.



Item 61103 Length: 190mm  
1/48 Scale Mitsubishi A6M5/5a Zero Fighter



Length: 189mm

1/48 Scale Mitsubishi A6M2b Zero Fighter Item 61016



Length: 190mm

1/48 Scale Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero Fighter Item 61025



Length: 190mm

1/48 Scale Mitsubishi A6M5c Zero Fighter Item 61027



**1/32**  
SCALE

Length: 283mm

1/32 Scale Mitsubishi A6M2b Model 21 Zero Fighter Item 60317



**1/32**  
SCALE

Length: 285mm

1/32 Scale Mitsubishi A6M5 Model 52 Zero Fighter Item 60318